A

Divine Legacy,

Bequeathed unto all

MANKIND,

OF ALL

Ranks, Ages and Sexes:

Directing

How we may live Holily in the Fear of God, and how we may die happily in the Favour of God; both which Duties are of Universal Concern.

The Rules here are, how to be *Truly Valourous* in warring a good Warfare, and in fighting the the good Fight of Faith while we Live, and to be *Blessedly Victorious* when we Die.

By *Christopher Ness*, Minister of the Gospel in *London*.

Exitus Acta probat, & Finis Coronat Opus, saith the Philosopher.

Our Last Works should be our Best Works, saith our Lord, *Rev.* 2. 19.

London, Printed by *T. S.* and sold by *T. Parkhurst*, at the *Bible* and *Three Crowns* in *Cheapside*, and *J. Robinson*, at the *Golden Lion* in St. *Paul's* Church-yard. 1700.

Candid Chriſtian,

I *Have been now (through the Grace and Mercy of my good God) a Labourer in my Lord's Harveſt, and a Vine-dreſſer in my Maſter's Vineyard almoſt Threeſcore Years, wanting but a very little of it; and in the ſpace of thoſe laſt Twenty Years I have (through the good hand of my God upon me, as* Ezra's *phraſe is* Chap. 7. 6, 9.) *been enabled to publiſh to the World this following* Catalogue *of Books, little and great. As,* 1. *The* Crown and Glory *of a Chriſtian, in the Year* 76. 2. *A* Chriſtian Walk *and Work on Earth, till he come to Heaven, in the Year* 77. 3. *The* Chryſtal Mirror, *or Chriſtian's Looking-Glaſs, ſhewing the Treachery of the Heart, in the Year* 78. 4. *An* Antidote againſt the Poiſon of Popery, *in the Year,* 78, 79. 5. *A* Diſcovery of Antichriſt *in his Riſe, Reign and Ruine, in the Year* 79. 6. *The* Devil's Patriarch, *in the Life of Pope* Innocent *XI. in the Year* 80. 7. *A* Spiritual Legacy *to Young Ones, in the Year* 81. 8. *A* Church-Hiſtory, *from* Adam *to this Day, and a* Scripture-Prophecy *to the End of the World, in the Year* 81, 82. 9. *A* New-Years Gift *for Children in the Year* 83. 10. *The* Wonderful Signs *of Wonderful Times, in the Year* 84. 11. *An* Half Sheet *upon the Comet, or Blazing-Star.*

3/6

12. *Three Sheets inlarged upon the same Subject.* 13. *A* Whip for the Fools Back, *who did Ridicule God's Holy Ordinance of Marriage.* &c. 14. *A* Key with the Whip, *unfolding the Intreagues of* Absalom *and* Achitophel; *both these latter are writ in Satyrical Verse.* 15. Advice to the Painter, *about the Earl of* Shaftsbury's *enlargement from the* Tower, *in smoother Verse.* 16. *An* Astrological and Theological Discourse, *upon the great Conjunction ushered in with a great Comet,* &c. 17. *A Strange and Wonderful* Trinity *or* Triplicity *of Stupendious Prodigies, namely, consisting of a Wonderful* Eclipse, *of a Wonderful* Comet, *and of a Wonderful* Conjunction; *all these without Date, were written between the Year* 82, *and* 89. 18. *My* First Volume *in Folio, called a Compleat* History *and* Mystery *of the Old and New-Testament, both* Logically discussed, *and* Theologically improved, *beginning at* Adam, *and ending at* Moses. 19. *The* Second Volume *in Folio, (having the same Title with the first) begins with* Joshuah, *and ends at* Solomon's *Birth.* 20. *The* Third Volume *in Folio, (with the same Title) begins at* Solomon's *Life, and ends at the end of the Old-Testament.* 21. *The* Fourth Volume *in Folio, (with the same Title) begins at the Birth of* Christ, *and ends at the Death of* John *the* Divine; *which is an Exposition*

position of the whole New-Testamen: All these Four Volumes *are now commended to the World by Three of our Learned and Judicious Divines, namely, Mr.* Matthew Barker, *M.* George Griffith, *and Mr.* Samuel Slater; *which Testimonial is printed at the bottom of the Dedicatory Epistle to the Fourth Volume, under their own Three Hands,* Tria sunt omnia, & instar omnium, &c. *this Work hath taken me wholly up from the Year* 89, *to this Year* 99. *And now* 22. *This* Divine Legacy, *which is* μακρὸν ἐν μικρῷ, multum in parvo, *much in a little.* Isocrates *wrote his best Book the last, and* Plato *died at* 81, *with his Pen in his Hand; and* Demosthenes *desired to do so,*&c. *Yet have we better Examples than those Philosophers, for* Joshuah *when he was* going the way of all the Earth, *and* stricken in years, *Josh.* 23. 2, *and* 14. *did then give most grave and godly Counsel to the Old-Testament Church* Chap. 23. *and* 24. *And* Paul *the* Aged, *wrote the more effectually to young* Philemon, *under that Title of Veneration,* Philem. ver. 9. *And the Beloved Disciple* John, *who (while Young, leaned upon his Lord's Bosom,* Joh. 13. 23, 25.) *did under the Venerable Name of* Elder. 2 *Joh.* 1. *and* 3 *Joh.* 1. *write his first* General Epistle *to* Children, Young Men *and* Fathers, *in the New Testament,* 1 Joh. 2. 12, 13, 14. *but*

above all, God himself thunders out threatnings against Children, Young Men *and* Aged, *Jer.* 6. 11, 12, 13. *In congruity to those perfect Patterns, I (an Old Servant of* Christ) *have drawn up this* Directory (talis, qualis est) *to all Ages, especially to us that are Old, adding only,* (1.) *That Old Age is a* dead weight: *'Tis then a difficult Duty to turn unto God, when we have been turning and running from him all our former Days. No Spur can move a Founder'd Horse, and Hard Wax takes no impression. When the Body is weak, and Presumption is strong, to say* [God is merciful] *is said* truly, *but not* safely. *Therefore,* (2) *All must be careful to* live well *while Young, and then shall we* die well, *whether Young or Old.* (3.) *When we have* seen an end *of all worldly* Perfections, *then may we best see, that* God's Commands *are* exceeding broad, *and all our Obedience to be exceeding narrow,* Psal. 119. 96. *The Good Lord grant that this* Legacy *may come to you in the* fulness *of the* blessing of the *Gospel of Christ,* Rom. 15. 29. *Amen.*

THE

THE CONTENTS OF THIS Divine Legacy.

CHAP. I:
Contains faln Man's Malady and Danger, pag. 1. to 42.

CHAP. II:
Faln Mam's Remedy, and Deliverer, p. 43, to 63.

CHAP. III.
The Redeemed are Conquerors, by their Strong Redemer, p. 54, 120.

CHAP. IV.

Advice to Young and Old, to war a good Warfare in God's Armour, and Watching unto Prayer, p. 130, to 177.

CHAP. V.

The Characters of True Conquerors, through the ſtrength of Chriſt, p. 177, to 232.

CHAP. VI.

Advice to the Aged, for ſaving the Soul, p. 232, to 319.

CHAP. VII.

The Holy Means for making Old Age, to become a Good Age, p. 320, to 357.

CHAP. VIII.

Contains both Counſel and Comfort. (1.) *Againſt the Evils of Old Age.* (2.) *Againſt the Fears of the Hour of Death. And,* (3.) *Againſt the Terrors of the Day of Judgment,* p. 358, to the laſt.

CHAP. I.

Man's Malady and Danger.

MAN's Life is a Warfare, *Job* 7. 1. Margin, which the Septuagint reads πειρατήριον, to ſignifie a place of Pirates, as *Paul* was in perils often both by Sea and Land, 2 *Cor.* 11. 26. ſo are we all while in this lower World; for Satan is both a Robber by Land, that ſeeks not for Straw, but for Gold (as *Chryſoſtom*'s Thief did ſay of himſelf) and he is a Pirate at Sea, hanging out falſe Colours to get in with us, he ſeeks not whom to bite, but whom to devour, 1 *Pet.* 5. 8. the word [καταπίη] ſignifies to ſwallow up at one mouth-full, and that no leſs than our precious and immortal Souls; therefore is he called *Abaddon*, Hebr. A *bad one* indeed, or the *wicked one*, and Ἀπολλύων, Greek, *Rev.* 9. 3. both which names ſignifie a Deſtroyer: He is a broken Bankrupt himſelf, and ordained for Deſtruction, and therefore his whole work is to involve all Mankind in his own Miſery, accounting it ſome com-

fort to have Companions therein.

Solamen miseris socios adhibere Doloris.

He hunts not (as *Nimrod* that Cruel Hunter) for our moneys, houſes, lands or liberties, but for our very lives (as the *Harlot* doth, *Prov.* 7. 23. yea to ſteal away our Souls from God, and the Crown of Glory from us; he is called in Scripture by ſuch names as are all of a deſtroying nature, as (1.) A *Dragon*, *Rev.* 12. 7. (2.) A *Lion*, 1 *Pet.* 5. 8. (3.) A *Serpent*, *Iſa.*27.1. (4.) A *Wolf*, *John* 10. 12. (5.) A *Murderer*, *John* 8. 44. (6.) A *Tormentor*, *Matth.* 18. 34. (7.) A *Fowler* and *Hunter*, *Pſal.* 91. 3. (8.) *Beelzebub*, *Mat.* 10. 25. & 12. 24, 27. (9.) *Devil*, quaſi *Do evil* often, and therefore it is no leſs than a Miracle of Mercy that we are not all of us deſtroyed by him through his craft and cruelty, his power and policy, eſpecially conſidering how he hath the upper ground of us, as he is *Prince* of the *Power* of the *Air*, *Eph.* 2. 2. when we are but weak and worthleſs Worms crawling here below upon the Earth, inſomuch that his Territories lay betwixt us and Heaven, which is our Fathers Houſe, therefore was *Lazarus*'s Soul carried by Angels through the Regions of the Air into *Abraham's boſom*, *Luke* 16. 22. Beſide, it ought to be conſidered with ſerioufneſs how *Satan* our *Adverſary* (as it ſignifies)

ſignifies) proved too hard for the Innocenteſt Man *Adam*, too hard for the Strongeſt Man, *Samſon*, and too hard for the Wiſeſt Man *Solomon*: If he could over-maſter all theſe *Three*, who were *green Trees*, what can we *dry Trees* expect? *Luke* 23. 31. If this *Strong Man*, yea and Armed too, even with Armour of proof, *Luke* 11. 21. became a Conquerour over *Adam* in his ſtate of Innocency; how much more may he more eaſily maſter the beſt of us? [*Si hoc Adamo in Paradiſo contigiſſet, quid nobis in ſterquibunt*] ſaith *Bernard*, If this foul fall befell *Adam* in the *Garden* of *Eden*, oh what may befall us who are now caſt out of *Paradiſe* upon the *dirty Dunghill* of this *preſent evil World! Gal.* 1. 4. It may be ſaid of the beſt of us, as it was ſaid of young *Troilus*'s grappling with great *Achilles*, There was *Impar congreſſus*, a very unfit and an unequal match betwixt them: Yea ſo bold and daring is this *Devil*, that he dared to Aſſault the *Second Adam* (as he had done before the *Firſt Adam*, hoping for the ſame ſucceſs.) Even the Son of God himſelf, who only could indeed over-match him, not only for himſelf, but more eſpecially for all his Redeemed: Moreover Satan is a Reſtleſs Adverſary out of his unſpeakable hatred againſt God and all goodneſs; as it

is ſaid of the Scorpion, there is not one minute of Time, wherein he doth not thruſt out his Sting, but keeps it in a continual and ſpeedy motion of poiſoning and deſtroying whatever he can reach; even ſo and much more that Old Serpent will watch night and day to ſting our Souls worſe than the Fiery Serpents did the Bodies of *Iſrael*, *Numb.* 21.

Conſider alſo how *Satan* is an Ubiquitary Adverſary; his Circuit he walks is the whole Earth, *Job* 1. 7. & 2. 2. he is call'd the *God of this World*, 2 *Cor.* 4. 4. which *lays in wickedneſs*, 1 *John* 5. 19. As the *True God* in the beginning did but ſpeak the word by his Creating Power, and every Creature in the whole Creation was perfectly wrought; ſo if *Satan* do but hold up his finger, or give but the leaſt whiſper to his Vaſſals, they are at his beck and obedience; he *leads them captive at his will*, 2 *Tim.* 2. 26. Yea and this he doth all over the World; no Land or Iſland is free from him, but the whole Univerſe may be called (as one part of it is) *Terra Diaboli*, the *Devil's Land*; he is the *Ruler* of the *Darkneſs* of *this World*, *Eph.* 6. 12. He is a *God* in this ſenſe, becauſe there is no *fleeing from his preſence*, &c. as *Pſa.* 139. 7, 8, 9. our baſe hearts and a buſie Devil will meet in all Lands. Add likewiſe to the aboveſaid, how

He

He is an *Everlaſting Adverſary* both 1. In reſpect of the *great World*; He began betimes with the firſt Man and Woman in the World, and he hath continued ever ſince to this preſent time, and he will continue even to the end, until our *Lord lays hold on him*, and *chain him up* for a 1000 *years*, *Rev.* 20. And 2. In reſpect of the *little World*, *Man*, who is as an *Epitome* of the *great World*, &c. Satan begins betimes, even at our very Conception; for as the *Serpent was more ſubtle than all the Beaſts of the Field*, *Gen.* 3. 1. ſo Satan's ſubtlety was moſt manifeſt in this matter, that when his Luciferian Pride had metamorphos'd him from a glorious Angel (as he was created) into a damned Devil, and therefore was caſt out of Heaven into Hell, and underſtanding how God deſigned to fill up that Habitation (which he had left with his Angels, *Jude verſe 6.* by a Remnant Redeemed out of Mankind. Hereupon he is ſaid to be *come down* (or rather *caſt down*) having *great Wrath* and Malice againſt Mankind, *Rev.* 12. 12. hating Man's Redeemer with a perfect hatred, and ſinning that unpardonable ſin againſt the *Holy Ghoſt* every moment, *&c.* and that his Cruelty to us is managed with the profoundeſt Craft and Policy, as is apparent in this, that he ſtayed not to pour his poiſon into

every Veſſel, as it was brought forth into the World, but he pours it into the Fountain or Spring head of Mankind, well knowing that in poiſoning our firſt Parents, he likewiſe poiſoned all their Poſterity in all ſucceeding Ages to the end of the World: *Thus*, ſaith the Apoſtle [*by one Man, Sin entred into the World*, Rom. 5.12. *and Death by Sin, and ſo Death paſſed upon all Men, for that all have ſinned*, and *v.*14. *Death hath Reigned from Adam to Moſes* (and ſo *down to us* in *our day*, &c.) even over *them that had not ſinned after the ſimilitude of Adam's Tranſgreſſion*:] So that *Infants* are no *Innocents*, being born with Original Sin, the firſt Sheet wherein they are wrapped, is woven of ſin, ſhame, blood and filth, *Ezek.* 16. 4, 6, &c. They are ſaid to ſin as they were in the loins of *Adam*; juſt as *Levi* is ſaid to pay Tithes to *Melchiſedech*, even in the loins of his Forefather *Abraham*, *Heb.* 7. 9, 10. otherwiſe *Infants* would not die, for *Death is the wages of ſin*, *Rom.* 6. 23. and the Reign of Death is procured by the Reign of ſin, which hath reigned over all Mankind, except *Chriſt*: All are ſinners, infected with the guilt and filth of ſin, the Rot (according to the Vulgar ſaying) over-runneth the whole Flock. Hence *David* reflects upon Original Sin as the Original cauſe of all his

Actuals,

Actuals, saying, [*Behold I was shapen in Iniquity, and in Sin did my Mother conceive me*, Psal. 51. 5.

Thus *Man's Malady* begins betimes, even in our Conception; this subtile Serpent sowed his Tares very early, so that we are all *born in our sin*, Joh. 9. 34. *Adam begat a Son in his own Image*, Gen. 5. 3. and his *Childrens Teeth are set on Edge* after he had eaten the sour Fruit of the forbidden Tree, *Ezek.* 18. 2. The same Hand that was reached forth to that forbidden Fruit, reached out both Sin and Death to the Fruit of his Loins wherein that Fruit was seminally, as the Branches are in a Common Stock; the actual Sin did not determine the bound of Misery in himself, but it brought a second Misery with it, even the Misery of the whole Nature of Mankind. *Adam* was the *Representative* or publick Person representing the whole mass of Mankind, (as a Parliament-man represents the whole Country he is chosen for) while *Adam* stood, we all stood in him; while he kept his Obedience in his state of Innocency, he kept his whole Estate and Nature safe and entire; but when he fell we all fell in him; in *Adam all die*, 1 Cor. 15. 22. Tho' we did not choose him, yet God did choose him for us, as our *Repre-*

ſentative; and his Sin was the greateſt Sin (next to that *Sin againſt the Holy Ghoſt*) as it had many aggravations againſt the greateſt *Light*, and the greateſt *Love* that ever was vouchſafed to any man, and therefore it was juſt with God ſo to puniſh, not only himſelf, but his whole Nature alſo for that ſinful Act. Hereby all the Sons and Daughters of *Adam* came to be deprived of Original Righteouſneſs; we are all *alienated* from the *Life of God*, Eph. 4. 18. born the *Children of Wrath*, Eph. 2. 3. and *come ſhort both of God's Glory*, and of our *own Duty*, Rom. 3. 23.

Adam firſt defiled the Nature of Mankind, and ever ſince the defiled Nature hath defiled the whole Off-ſpring thereof, leaving them under the Curſe of God, and liable unto Death in the latitude of it, even unto *Death*, *Temporal*, *Spiritual* and *Eternal*: The Fall of *Adam* was the Death of himſelf, and the Death of us; yea, and alſo it was the Death of our dear Redeemer to redeem us from Spiritual and Eternal Death. Now as is the Root, ſo are the Branches; as is the Fountain, ſo are the Waters that flow from it: [*Generatum ſequitur Naturam Generantis*,] that which is begotten doth follow the Nature of that which begetteth; *who can bring a clean* thing out of an unclean?

clean? not one, *Job* 14. 4. that which is *born of the Fleſh is Fleſh*, Joh. 3. 6. [*Corruptus parit Corruptum*] one corrupt thing brings forth another; yea, the Sower ſoweth clean Grain, yet even *that* brings forth Chaff, (as well as Wheat) from which it was winnowed before it was Sown.

Father *Auguſtin* ſaith, There is nothing more certain than *Original Sin*, yet nothing more ſecret and hard to be underſtood how it is conveyed from Parents to Children. Many Diſputes there be about the manner how Sin is propagated from *Adam* to his Off-ſpring; ſome of which deſerve no better Character than that of *Ariſtotle de Vacuo* [ὁ λόγος περὶ κενοῦ, κενὸς λόγος] ſuch diſcourſes upon the empty place are but empty things: 'Tis ſufficient for us to know, that God by a juſt imputation doth realize the Infection into the whole Race of *Adam*, in whom we were, as in a common lump, and in his Leaven we are all ſowred. We know that leprous Parents do beget leprous Children, and there be Diſeaſes which are call'd hereditary, and incurable by man; we took this Infection from our Parents, and we tranſmit it to our Children; ſo come we to be called a *Seed of Evil Doers*, *Children that are Corrupters*, as well as corrupted, *Iſai.*

c. 1.

c. 1. *v.* 4. I have read the ſtory of ſome fooliſh People, who falling all together into a deep Pit, fell a diſputing one with another how they came there, *&c.* but one wiſer than the reſt adviſed them to lay aſide thoſe Niceties, and rather conſult about ſome proper means whereby they might all be delivered out of that danger, without which they were in all probability like to periſh: Even ſuch are thoſe vain Ventilations about this abſtruce point of Sins entrance into the World, whether by that one perſon *Adam*'s fall, or by every ones fall in his own perſon, the frothy Wits of the *Arminians* do fondly deny Original Sin. But ſuch as are *wiſe to Salvation* have learnt better Leſſons in *Chriſt*'s School, and they feel otherwiſe in the School of their own ſmarting experience. Therefore we ought all ſeriouſly to conſider, how the Greek Fathers call it πανσπερμία, the Seed-plot of all Actual Tranſgreſſions, *&c.* and the Latin Fathers call it *Fomes Peccati*, the laſting Fewel that feeds the Fire of our burning Luſts; but above all, how the Holy Scriptures doth Characterize it, calling it the *Body of Sin*, Rom. 6. 6. and the *Sin* that *dwells in us*, Rom. 7. 17. and the *Law of the Members*, ver. 23. and that which ſo *eaſily beſets us*, Hebr. 12. 1. and

David

David calls it the *Iniquity of the Heels*, (which was ready to trip him up, and to lay him all along upon the ground at every turn and return of the Tempter upon him) *Pſal.* 49. 5. And if we do as little *Zacheus* did, namely, climb up the Sycamore Tree to take a full proſpect of his lovely Lord from top to toe, *Luk.* 19. 3, 4, *&c.* ſo if we get up into the Mount of the Old and New Teſtament, and take a full view of the foulneſs of Original Sin. The right Scriptural Account of Original Sin is this,

1. That man who had been *God's delight* before, *Prov.* 8. 31. became both *hated of God*, Pſal. 5. 5. and an *hater of God*, Rom. 1. 30. the Greek is Θεοστύγοι, ſignifying to *hate God as Hell.*

2. That faln man is become *intenſively evil*, *protenſively only evil*, and *extenſively always* and *continually evil* in the thoughts and imaginations of his heart, *Gen.* 6. 5.

3. That man's *Heart is deceitful above all things*, and *deſperately wicked*, Jer. 17. 9.

4. His Thoughts are *Thoughts of iniquity*, Iſa. 59. 7.

5. He walks in the *vanity of his Mind*, Epheſ. 4. 17. having his *underſtanding darkned*, and his *Heart blinded*, ver. 18.

6. His *Conſcience* is defiled, *Tit.* 1. 15.

7. His

7. His *Eyes are full of Adultery*, and he cannot *ceaſe from Sin*, 2 Pet. 2. 14.

8. His *Throat an open Sepulchre*, the *poiſon of Aſps* upon his *Tongue and Lips*, &c. Rom. 3. 13, 14.

9. In a word, all mans Members and Faculties are marr'd and maim'd by the fall of *Adam* (as might more largely be demonſtrated from Scripture) the firſt man defiled Nature, and ever ſince Nature hath defiled every man; his whole Frame is out of frame; whole evil is in man, and whole man is in evil: As in *Noah*'s Flood, not any one part of the Earth could be ſeen dry. So nor any one part of man can be found that is not infected with this *Original Pollution*; and the chief cauſe of all our Actual Sins, is charged, not upon Satan, but upon this *Evil Concupiſcence* that is inbred in us, *Jam.* 1. 15. The Tempter might ſtrike Fire long enough in vain, if we did not find him dry Tinder for his Sparks to fall upon: We cannot ſay as our *ſinleſs Lord* ſaid [the *Prince of this World cometh and finds nothing in me*,] that is, to favour his Temptation, *Joh.* 14. 30. But alas, when he comes to tempt us, he finds a Treacherous Party within, this *Birth-ſin* of ours, which betrays us oftentimes into his hands, as hath hapned unto ſome Cities

Cities beſieged, whoſe Gates have been opened by ſome Traiterous Citizens within for a free entrance of the Enemy that were beſieging it round about. Hence is it, that all men are ſaid in Holy Scripture to be *dead in ſin*, Epheſ. 2. 1. and *Bond-ſlaves to Satan*, Heb. 2. 15. and ſubject to all Calamities of this Life under the *Curſe of God*, Gal. 3. 10. Yea and good men, even the *beſt of men* are but *men at the beſt*; for *Original Sin* in them is ſtronger than their *Grace*; for if God ſhould leave us with our ſtock of Grace that he hath graciouſly given us, and let us be alone but a while in the hands of our own Counſels, this ſin of our Nature would eaſily ſwallow up our ſtock of Grace; *wo to us* when *God departs from us*, Hoſ. 9. 12. The Reaſon is, becauſe *Grace* given to us is like the putting of Hot Water into that which is Cold: Tho' this will warm it for the preſent, yet the Water will reduce it ſelf into its own natural temper of Coldneſs, unleſs Fire be kept continually under it. Take another Example, as a River would run (*cæteris paribus*) the nigheſt way to the Sea (which is the Receptacle of all Rivers) were it let alone to its own tendency by nature; but we ſee the various ſituation of the Earth, (in ſome places higher than others)

others) and by the Art and Induſtry of Man the moſt Rapid River is madd to run in crooked Streams (in and out) to break its forcible paſſage; even ſo this Original Sin would drive all perſons the nigheſt way to Hell, were it not that it meets with not only the ſeveral Tempers and Diſpoſitions of Nature in the Sons and Daughters of Mankind, which makes it work variouſly according to their various Conſtitutions, as *David* ſaith [*I have kept my ſelf from my iniquity*] *Pſal.* 18. 23. that is, from my Conſtitution ſin, *&c.* but alſo, and that more eſpecially, through the over-ruling Power of God, and that by two ways; 1. Either by giving *Reſtraining Grace*, even to Pagans, as he did to that Pagan King *Abimelech*, *Gen.* 20. 6. whereby God kept him at a modeſt diſtance from medling with *Sarah*, *Abraham*'s wife, which otherwiſe he would have undoubtedly defiled, ſeeing ſo many Kings (tho' called *Chriſtian*) make it their too common practice; or, 2. By giving *Renewing Grace*, even to his own choſen and called ones, whereby he changeth their Natures ſo, that one of the Antient Fathers tells this Story of a Young Man, who had been for ſome time intangled with an Harlot, and meeting with ſome Remorſe of Conſcience, he withdrew from her upom ſome occaſions

occaſions he had in another Country, and after a little time returning home, this impudent Whore meets him, takes hold of him, and ſaid to him [*Ego ſum Ego*] I am the ſame Woman I was when you left me; at which he ſmartly replied to her, [*ſed ego non ſum ego*] but I am not the ſame Man I was, through the Grace of God, whereby he ſaid with *David* [*The Snare is broken, and my Soul is delivered*] *Pſa.* 124.7. therefore *if any man be in Chriſt, he is a new Creature, old things are paſt away, behold all things are become new,* 2 *Cor.* 5.17. Where *Chriſt* comes, he ſaith, [*Behold I make all things new*] *Rev.* 21. 5. both all the Members of the Body, and all the Faculties of the Soul: Theſe all were formerly [ὅπλα τῆ ἀδικίας] weapons of wickedneſs unto ſin, but now become weapons of Righteouſneſs unto Holineſs, *Rom.* 6. 13, 17, 18, 19. ſo that *Chriſt* makes new underſtandings, new wills, new memories, new conſciences, *&c.* in the inner man; yea and new tongues, hands and feet, *&c.* to talk, walk and work for God in the outward man.

☞ Let this likewiſe be well weighed, how this Original pollution of the faln Nature is like the firſt Confuſed Chaos at the Creation of the World, which had the ſeeds of all ſeveral kinds of Creatures in it,

it, and that prolifick Vertue continues unto this day; even ſo in Original Sin, lays the Spawn of all ſeveral kinds of ſins which laſteth all our lives, until death deſtroy this body of Death at the laſt, as the *other* will laſt while the World laſteth: So *This* fretting Leproſie of ſin is typically deſcribed in the Law of that Plague, *Levit.* 14.41.43,44,45. The houſe which hath that Contagion, all the ſcraping of the Walls within it will not cleanſe it until the houſe it ſelf, with the Stones and Timber of it be broken down, yea and it begins betimes as well as it laſts long. This ſour Leaven doth leaven the whole lump with its ſowrneſs, and ſpreads it ſelf over all the *Ages of Man*, as Infancy, Childhood, Youth, and old Age. 1. *Infancy.* *Auſtin*'s ſtory [*Vidi Zelantem parvulum*:] I my ſelf ſaw a little one riſe up in Rage againſt his fellow-ſuckling for beguiling him of his Mothers Milk; from whence that Antient Father proves and confeſſes, that ſin began betimes both in himſelf and in others. 2. *Childhood*; there is much *folly bound up in the heart of a Child*, *Prov.* 22. *v.* 15. as fardles or packs are bound upon the Carriers Horſes back, and theſe *bonds of Iniquity* keeps him faſt in the gall of bitterneſs, *Acts* 8. 23. ſo makes not only *Childhood*, but alſo, 3. *Youth* to be not only *Vanity*,

Vanity, but likewiſe often abounds with Villany, *Eccleſ.* 11. 9, 10. with 12.1. where the Preacher preſſeth upon *Youth* to indulge themſelves in their youthful luſts, if they dare do ſo, adding a ſtinging [*But*] which marrs the Yonkers mirth, God will judge thee for all thy Tricks of youth; account them not Trifles, which both *Job* and *David* ſo bitterly bewailed, *Job* 13.26. and *Pſal.* 25. 7. Therefore he exhorts ſuch to remember their Creators at that time, as *Pſal.* 119.9. before 4*ly*. Old Age come, which is an *Evil Age* both for ſin and miſery.

But more plainly, this Truth of Man's Malady and Danger is held forth in that Text [*The ſtrong Man armed*, &c.] which declares *Man's Malady and Danger*, *Luke* 11.21. where *Satan* is deſcribed, 1. By his Kind or Sex, neither a weak Worm, or a weak Woman, but a *Man*, one of the ſtronger Sex, and not of the weaker. 2. By his Quality, a *ſtrong Man*, ὁ ἰσχυρὸς, *ab* ἰσχύω, one that can do all things, *Phil.* 4. 13. where the word is uſed *Ben Chaiil*, Heb. a Man of Valour, ſo ſtrong, that he is able to Trudge over all the World in his Travels, notwithſtanding his long continuance in this round walk, he walk'd it in *Job*'s days, *Job* 1. 7. & 2. 2. as he ſays of himſelf, when God ſummons him in to appear before him, as in his High Court of Juſtice, and he held

on the ſame, walking round about without wearineſs, even in *Peter*'s days, 1 *Pet.* 5. 8. the word is περιπατεῖν, a Peripatetick, as before; yea and he holds up ſtill in the ſame walk and work, even in our days; for who among us cannot experience that a *buſie Devil*, and a *baſe Heart*, do not daily meet together to work us Woe in our Way to Heaven. This he ſtill is able to do on Earth, tho' he was hurl'd out of Heaven (as *Jude verſe 6.*) now almoſt ſix thouſand years ago; yea and he will carry on the ſame Curſed Courſe, even to the end of the Old World, until our Lord come to lay *hold upon this Old Dragon, and bind him for a thouſand years*, and ſo *ſhut him up*, and ſet a *Seal upon him* that he ſhould *deceive the Nations no more*, till the 1000 years be fulfilled, and after that he *muſt be looſed a little ſeaſon*, *Rev.* 20. 3. We read indeed of a ſort of Philoſophers that are call'd *Peripateticks* (which ſignifies *Round Walkers*) but none like this ſtrong Trudg-over, who hath not only out-laſted and out-lived, but alſo (as it may be fear'd) hath finally deceived all thoſe *Pagan Peripateticks*, &c. 3. He is deſcribed by his Qualifications; he is not only thus qualified as a ſtrong Traveller, but alſo as a ſtrong Warriour, therefore he is ſaid to be [καθωπλισμένος] *i. e. Armed*, and not barely

ſo,

ſo, for גב in compoſition ſignifies *Valdè* or *Validè*, compleatly Armed, ſuch are his Accoutrements and Habiliments of War, that he is Armed Cap-a-pee (as the phraſe is) *a Capite ad Calcem*, from Head to Foot; ſo that he is (as *Achilles* was ſaid to be) in all parts *impenetrable*, and not only ſo, but as he is a Spirit he is *impaſſive* alſo, as to man; for 'tis neither man's Words, nor man's Blows that can wound this Spiritual Adverſary, who is hereupon found to be the more mortal an Enemy to man's Soul and Salvation. Of this point I have ſpoke in the beginning of this Chapter. If it be farther enquired how this ſtrong Adverſary is armed? To this I anſwer in general, He is verily a *Goliah*, an *Achitophel* and a *Doeg*, all in one together; more particularly,

1. He is Armed with an Arm of Strength as *Goliah* was, ſo it may be ſaid to the beſt of men, what *Saul* ſaid to *David*, 1 *Sam.* 17. 33. thou *art not able* to fight with this Philiſtin, *for thou* art but a *Stripling*, and he *a Man of War from his Youth*; as *Amnon* was too ſtrong for *Tamar*, and ſo *Raviſhed her*, &c. 2 *Sam.* 13. 12, 13. And as the *Betrothed Damſel* could not ſtand *before a man that roſe up againſt her* in the *Field*, *Deut.* 22. 26, 27, 28. Even ſo is *this matter*, no man, not the

beſt of men, (who are but men at the beſt, as before) can be able to match this matchleſs *Goliah*, no more than the *ſilly Dove without Heart* or Grace, (as *Ephraim* is called, *Hoſ.* 7. 11.) can match the ſtrong Eagle, or the ſimple Lamb the fierce Lion, *&c.* no more can any man (who is but a poor worm, *Pſal.* 22. 6.) make any effectual Reſiſtance againſt this Prince, Fowl of the Air, *Epheſ.* 2. 2. or againſt this Roaring Lion, who hath ſtill his concreated Strength of an Angel. *Zech.* 12. 8. for tho' he loſt by his fall in his *Morals*, yet not in his *Naturals*, he is ſo ſtrong ſtill (ſaith *Luther*) that he is able to deſtroy the whole World in the ſpace of one hour, if the Lord would but permit him to lay forth his Angelical (or rather Diabolical) Strength to the utmoſt for ſuch an end. This *ſtrong man* hath conquered all Perſons, (yea even *Adam*, *Samſon* and *Solomon*, as before) and all People, all Nations and Languages; he hath with *Saul* ſlain his thouſands, and with *David* his ten thouſands, yea and with the Harlot, *Prov.* 7. 26. hath *caſt down* and *wounded both the many* and the *mighty*: He is the *Maſter* of *Harlots*, as *Rome* is called the *Mother* of *Harlots*, Rev. 17. 5. Nor do we find in any Age of the World, that any meer Mortal Man

was

was ever able to match him at all times by any ſtrength of his own, none but that *God-Man Jeſus Chriſt* was ever able to ſtand before him: yet is it worth our obſervation; Oh! what a prevailing Power had this *ſtrong man*, (by Divine Permiſſion) even over the pure ſinleſs Body of our Saviour himſelf; firſt in *driving it into* the *Wilderneſs*, Mark 1. 12, 13. then in hugging it up to the top of the *Pinacle* of the *Temple*, Matt. 4. 5. and then in carrying it up likewiſe unto the *top* of an *exceeding high Mountain*, Matt. 4. 8. wherein this *ſtrong man* did far out-do *Goliah*, who could not do ſo to *David*'s Body. Nevertheleſs *Chriſt* became the *ſtronger man*, (as he is called) *Luk.* 11. 22. and did conquer him compleatly in all his three Temptations.

2. As *Satan* is a *Goliah* for *Strength* and *Power*, ſo he is an *Achitophel* for *Craft* and *Policy*; he can over-wit us as well as over-power us: 'Tis ſaid [*now the Serpent was more ſubtle than all the Beaſts of the Field*] Gen. 3. 1. So that old Serpent the Devil, (as he is called, *Rev.* 12. 9. and 20. 2.) is more crafty than all Mortals in the World; this muſt needs be becauſe the *Wit* of the *Angelical Nature* doth vaſtly tranſcend the *Wit* of the beſt *Humane Nature*. Inſomuch as his Wit is

not ſo clogged and clouded with fleſhly impediments, which oft make the Mind of man to become a dim, dark and confuſed Chaos, by *impriſoning* the *Truth* and *detaining it in unrighteouſneſs*, Rom. 1. 18. that is, the knowledge of Truth ſometimes is (as it were) ſo locked up under reſtraint, that our *Conſciences* (which are as a Prophet to the ſoul of man) may not trouble us in our ſecure ſinning againſt the Lord; whereas the Wit and Underſtanding of *Satan* may be called *Spiritual* as he is a *Spirit*, and not fettered with Fleſh, (as we are) therefore acts more freely and without diſturbance, ſo is more quick and piercing, whereby he can more eaſily feel the Pulſes of mankind, and fit them all a ſuitable Temptation unto every Perſon's Natural Temper; he well knew what an *Apple* would do to *Eve*, what a *Grape* would do to *Noah*, what a *Wedge* of *Gold* would do to *Achan*, what a *Talent* of *Silver* would do to *Gehazi*; and many more ſuch inſtances might be added, all to ſhew how *Satan* is πανῦργος, *ingenioſe nequam*, wittily wicked in preparing penniworths for all Perſons according to their ſeveral Conditions and Diſpoſitions; and what he cannot carry and *conquer* by *ſtrength*, he will do it by *ſubtilty*; having not only the *wit* of an *Angel*,

Angel, but alſo the *wiſdom* of a *God*, as he is called the *God of this World*, 2 Cor. 4. 4. *NB. Obſerve* how the Holy Scripture deſcribes his Furniture.

1. He hath his νοήματα, which ſignifies *Sophiſtical Counſels*, pretending one thing, and intending another, [*leſt Satan ſhould beguile and get an advantage againſt us*, for *we are not ignorant of his devices*,] 2 Cor. 2. 11. where the Apoſtle uſeth [πλεονεκτηθῶμεν] for getting advantage, which ſignifies to over-reach in Bargains, for getting more gain than belongs to him, this *Satan* doth; when that Serpent would hurt and *deſtroy* thoſe *herbs of grace* that *grow* in *God's Holy Mountain*, and will not be confined to *feed upon Duſt*, (the *World that lies in wickedneſs*) which is his *limited Diet*, Iſa. 65.25. *Satan* had got an advantage againſt the Church of *Corinth* in their over-rigorous Diſcipline againſt the Inceſtuous Perſon, 2 *Cor.* 2. 7. And now he cautions them, that this grand Cheater may not cheat them alſo in the exerciſe of their Gifts and Graces one toward another, *ver.* 10, 11.

2. *Satan* hath his πανουργίας, which ſignifies a cunning crafty dealing among mankind; thus the ſame Apoſtle uſeth this phraſe to the ſame Church, ſaying [I am *jealous over* you with a *godly jealou-*

ſie, &c. for I fear, leſt by any *means*, as the *Serpent beguiled Eve through his ſubtilty* (or cunning Craft), ſo your *Minds ſhould be corrupted* from the *ſimplicity* that is *in Chriſt*] 2 Cor. 11. 2, 3. Intimating that *Satan* is an old Sophiſter and Blood-Sucker (who devoureth not *Widows Houſes* with the *Phariſees*, but the pretious ſouls of moſt Perſons) hath had the long experience of ſome thouſands of years, and knew then well enough how to over-wit, and over-reach them in that time; therefore doth he thus caution them to be upon their watch againſt his wily Craft. How much more is this *Old Doctor* in our Day (now almoſt 6000 years old) ſtrong in his ſo long experiences to feel the pulſes of all Perſons after the moſt critical manner, and the better to ſuit every ones Humour and Diſpoſition, he underſtands what hath been ſucceſsful, and what not. Hence it is, that he ſo ſeldom miſcarrieth in any of his Diabolical Attempts, unleſs it be when our dear Redeemer (the *ſtronger Man*) doth engage himſelf againſt him for us.

3. *Satan* hath likewiſe his μεθοδείας, his Wiles and *Methods* as the ſame Apoſtle ſaith, [*Finally, my Bretbren, be ſtrong in the Lord*, and in *the power of his might*, put on *the whole armour of God*, that ye may

may *be able to ſtand againſt the Wiles of the Devil,*] Epheſ. 6. 11. this Greek word for *Methods* or Wiles, is derived of μετὰ and ὁδὸς, that is, *by the way*, becauſe of his *way-layings* with his Stratagems and Ambuſhments which are oft more ſucceſsful than force of Arms, as *Joſh.* 8. 2, 5, 15, *&c.* the Greek Word is an Alluſion unto *Dan's Adder in the path*, Gen. 49. 17. So doth this Serpent, he lies lurking in the way, and bites the Heels of Paſſengers, whereby he transfuſes his poiſon to the very Head and Heart. The Holy Patriarch *Jacob* compared his Son to an *Adder*, foreſeeing by his Spirit of Prophecy, how the *Tribe* of *Dan* would ſubtilely and ſuddenly ſurprize the *men of Laiſh*, who lived *ſecurely* and *careleſly*, having no Magiſtrate (or *Heir* of *Reſtraint*, Hebr.) to *put them unto ſhame*, Judg. 18. 7, 10. Even ſo and much more than ſo, doth that *Old Serpent Satan* ſet upon ſuch Souls as are moſt lull'd aſleep in the Cradle of carnal Security: He hath the ſudden jumps of a Lion ſometimes, and when the Lion's Hide will not ſerve his turn in his jumping Aſſaults, he can then piece it with the Fox's Skin, or with the Serpent's Slough; ſo that when the ſudden jumps of a Lion do fail him, he hath ſtill the ſecret lurkings of a Serpent,

his

his ſubtle windings and turnings to circumvent us, and to aſſault us at unawares, and to ſet upon us unexpectedly on our Backs, with his furious Conveyances, as he did upon *David* when he thought his *Mountain was ſo ſtrong*, that he could *never be moved*, Pſal. 30. 6, 7. yet how did this ſubtle Serpent ſecretly convey his Venom into his Heart, not only in the matter of both his *Adultery* and *Murder*, 2 Sam. 11. 4, 27. but alſo when this *Satan provoked* David to *number the people* at the latter end of his Reign, 1 *Chron.* 21. 1. *Provoked*, that is, *Satan* would not let him reſt, till he had prevailed.

In the third place I come to ſhew how this *ſtrong man Satan* is not only a *Goliah* for Strength and Power, as alſo an *Achitophel* for Craft and Policy, but likewiſe a *Doeg* for Malice and Miſchief; he is a more *mighty Hunter* than the great *Nimrod*, *Gen.* 10. 9. who died ſome thouſands of years ago; but this *cruel Hunter* lived long before *Nimrod*, even from the beginning of the World, and lives ſtill, yea and is like to laſt until the laſt end of the World, and therefore he is called *Kako-Dæmon*, the Envious One, or Enemy, κατ' ἐξοχήν, *Matt.* 13. 25, 28. having many curſed Properties. As

1. He is antiently Malicious, therefore our

our Lord calls him a *Murderer from the* Beginning, *Joh.* 8. 44. he hath drove this damnable Trade from *Adam* till now.

2. This malignant Adverſary is miſchievouſly Malicious, he ſeeks not whom he may ſcratch, or bite, or wound only, but whom he may devour, (as before) 1 *Pet.* 5. 8. How maliciouſly Miſchievous he is to the Body of Man, as in the caſe of that miſerable *Demoniack*, whoſe Body he violently threw into thoſe two mercileſs Elements, *ſometimes into the Fire*, and *ſometimes into the Water*, yea and cutting and rending it when he was conſtrained to leave it, *Mark* 9. 22. How miſchievous he is alſo to the Eſtates of Men, as he was to *Job*'s Eſtate, which he deſtroyed by Fire and Storms, *&c.* as he was afterwards to his *Body*, ſmiting it with Biles from top to Toe, and every Bile (or Blain) (the *Rabbins* ſay) had each of them a Devil in them: Moreover (to mention no more inſtances) ſee how maliciouſly Miſchievous was *Satan* likewiſe unto *Job*'s *good Name*, which he would have blaſted even to the All-knowing God, in calling *Job* God's ſelf-ſeeking Servant; as if *Job* had been only byaſſed with the gain of his Godlineſs; thus he did ſordidly calumniate what he could not poſſibly contradict: How was it then, that *Clodius*

accuſat

accuſat Mæchos, Vice it ſelf undertook to correct but a falſely called Sin: Whereas the bleſſedneſs of an Angel (wherewith *Satan* was at firſt created) could not engage himſelf to continue the Servant of his Creator as the Holy Angels which fell not with him, did and do ſo to this day: But more eſpecially he is miſchievous to the Souls of Mankind. It may be ſaid that the Sword of this Strong Man reacheth even unto the very ſoul, as *Jer.* 4. 10. He both ſlaſhes and wounds the Soul, and doth ambitiouſly aſpire like *Lucifer* to be *like the Moſt High*, Iſa. 14. 14. and to have a power to kill the Soul (as well as Body, Eſtate and Good Name) which is God's Prerogative only, *Matt.* 10. 28. However his main Mark *Satan* aimeth at is to *procure evil againſt our Souls*, Jer. 26. 19. and therefore as the *Syrians* were commanded to *fight* againſt *neither ſmall nor great*, but againſt the *King of Iſrael*, 2 Chron. 18. 30. So our fleſhly luſts are thoſe *Syrians* and Soldiers whom *Satan* commands to war principally againſt the precious Soul, 1 *Pet.* 2. 11. and his Malice is moſtly to be miſchievous to Saints more than to Sinners; for he tempted *David* (*a man after Gods own heart*, 1 Sam. 13. 14.) to groſſer and greater ſins than ever he did, not only *Saul*, who died

in

in his Sin, even of ſelf-murder, yet never fell into ſuch foul acts of ſin as *David* did, but alſo than ever he did tempt *Ahab*, tho' *he ſold himſelf to work wickedneſs*, 1 King. 21.25. yet this *none-ſuch Sinner* was only tempted to covet his Neighbours Vineyard, and not his Neighbours Wife, yea and life too, as *David* did. The reaſon is this, becauſe *Satan* is ſatisfied with the *evil ſtate* that *Sinners* remain in, ſo he needs not to tempt them to *evil Acts*, well knowing, that ſuch Actions will as naturally flow from them, as Water doth from a Fountain: Thus *David* ſaith to *Saul* [*wickedneſs proceedeth* (even naturally) *from* the *wicked*] 1 Sam.24.13. as if they needed no Tempter, but will Tempt themſelves, *Jam.* 1. 14, 15. *Satan* matters not for *Actions*, but only where he cannot ſecure perſons and ſtill keep them captive in an evil *State*. *NB.* This Reaſon may be rendred, why ſome *civil Moraliſts* do lead more blameleſs and more ſpotleſs lives, than ſome Saints and ſanctified Souls, (who ſometimes may be left of God to *Satan*'s buffeting Meſſengers to humble them, as 2 *Cor.* 12. 7, 8.) becauſe 'tis enough for the Temper to know that theſe meer *moral men* do ſtill abide in a *Chriſtleſs-ſtate*, but as to ſuch as are *delivered from the power of Belial*,

and

and are *tranſlated into* the *Kingdom of Grace*, Col. 1. 12, 13, 14. Thoſe be they againſt whom this *Envious One* is moſt maliciouſly miſchievous, and when he ſees that he cannot keep them from Heaven, he will do them all the miſchief he poſſibly can; he will ſend them (if poſſible) even haulting to Heaven. Herein *Pharaoh* (that *Dragon of Egypt*, ſo called, *Ezek.* 29. 3. was a *Type* and Figure of this old Red Dragon the *Devil*, who was calm and quiet enough with *God's Iſrael*, while he found they could be content to be his Bond-ſlaves in *Mortar-Work*, &c. but when they begin to be gone out of his Kingdom, *&c.* then he rages and purſues them with his Chariots and Horſemen, *&c.* As *Pharaoh* purſued *Iſrael* as they were paſſing towards the *Earthly Canaan*, ſo Satan purſueth us in our paſſage towards the *Heavenly Canaan*; and as *Pharaoh* in his purſuit of *Iſrael* was at length drowned in the *Red-Sea*: So this may be for ſtrong Conſolation to us, that this Saint-purſuing *Satan* ſhall at laſt be drowned in the *Red-Sea* of our bleſſed Saviour's Blood; for we are told to our Comfort, that our *Redeeming Angel will come down from Heaven, having the Key of the bottomleſs Pit*, and a *great Chain in his hand*, and *will lay hold* on the *Dragon, that old Serpent*,

Serpent, the *Devil*, and not only *bind him* for a *thouſand years*, but he will *caſt him* likewiſe into the *lake of Fire* and *Brimſtone*, where *he* (together with the *Beaſt*, and the *Falſe Prophet*) ſhall be *tormented day and night for ever and ever*, Rev. 20. 1, 2, 3, and 10, verſes. In the mean time we muſt expect, that this *Serpent* and *Dragon* will be ſpetting forth the Poiſon of his Malice againſt us; for ſuch is his Malice to all the Saints, that he will firſt tempt them to Sin, and then he will accuſe them for Sin; as it is ſtoried of the *Ruſſians*, they are ſo malicious one againſt another, that ſometimes a man will hide ſome of his own Goods in the Houſe of him whom he hateth, and then accuſe him for the ſtealing of them; juſt ſo doth the Devil deal many times with God's deareſt Servants; thus *Joſeph*'s Steward firſt foiſted his Lord's Cup into *Benjamin*'s Sack, and then accuſed him for ſtealing it, *Gen.* 44. 2, 4. So that tempted Souls may ſay to Satan, (when he would tempt them to ſin, and after will accuſe them of ſin) as the young Soldier ſaid to *Joab* his General, [*Tho' I ſhould receive a thouſand Shekels of Silver*, yet *will I not dare to do what thou* (*Satan*) *would draw me into*, for the *King of Kings hath charged* me to the contrary; and

ſhould

ſhould I do otherwiſe, I ſhall then *work falſhood againſt my own life*; for *there is no matter that can be hid from the King*, and thou *thy ſelf would ſet thy ſelf againſt me*, 2 Sam. 18. 12, 13, *&c.* Thus *Satan* dealt with *Jehoſhua* the High-Prieſt, accuſing him for wearing thoſe very Garments that himſelf had ſoiled, *Zech.* 3. 1, 2, 3, 4. yea, and thus *Satan* dealt with our Dear Saviour himſelf, to whom he made an offer of his giving to him all the Kingdoms of the World, and the Glories of them, if he would fall down and worſhip him, *Matt.* 4. 8. yet afterwards this *Accuſer of the Brethren* (as he is called *Rev.* 12. 10.) doth by his Inſtruments accuſe our Lord for aſpiring after one of the leaſt of thoſe Kingdoms of the World, namely, that little Kingdom of *Judæa*, *Matt.* 27. 11, 29, 37. and this is the Tempters Method with all tempted Souls; he will always *extenuate* ſin in the time of his Temptation to it, but after the Commiſſion of it, he will *aggravate* it in his accuſation for it, that he may drive the Soul into deſpair, *&c.* Thus he dealt with King *Saul*, whom he firſt perſuaded to ſpare *Amalek*, under the notion of a good Deed or Work of Mercy; hereby he tempted him, and prevailed to ſpare King *Agag*, and the *fatteſt* of the *Flock*,

1 *Sam.*

1 *Sam.* 15.8,9. Yet this ſame *Satan* comes to *Saul* in the likeneſs of *Samuel*, and notoriouſly aggravates this Action (which before he had preſented to him in a plauſible Dreſs of candour and kindneſs to the Creature, *&c.*) and ſets it home with weight upon *Saul*'s Conſcience; eſpecially when he ſaw him almoſt overwhelmed with deepeſt Diſtreſſes, now repreſenting the ſame Action as moſt horrible, heinous and damning, and all to drive him down at-once into the Pit of Deſperation, 1 *Sam.* 28. 11, 19, 20. And thus by Divine permiſſion the Devil deals with many Souls, which are far more dear to God, than this *Saul* was, *&c.*

Hereby the third curſed property of this *Doeg* the *Devil* is made manifeſt, namely, that he is not only *antiently*, *maliciouſly*, but alſo *univerſally* miſchievous to all Mankind, even to all Saints, and to all Sinners, at the leaſt intentionally againſt every individual perſon of both ſorts, only with this difference; as *firſt* for *Sinners*, he makes them to become his Hackney-Horſes, according to *Tertullian*'s phraſe [*Impii perſecutores inſeſſorem Diabolum habent*] all wicked Perſecutors have the Devil Riding upon their backs, whom he whips and ſpurrs end-ways into an high Gallop, even all the days of their lives, and

then, when the Night of their Deaths comes upon them, he lodges them at laſt in the Hot Stables of Hell: And thus *Satan* made *Saul* his Hackney, upon whom he ſat as his Rider, and ſpurr'd him forward for many days in his perſecuting of *David*, and to whom he gave but this very *cold Comfort* at his Death [*To morrow thou ſhalt be with me*, &c.] 1 *Sam.* 28. 19,20. which indeed was no better a place to lodge his Hackney in, at his Night of Death, than in the Hot Rooms of Hell-fire. But *ſecondly*, As to the *Saints* (who are not the *Devil*'s *Vaſſals* as *Sinners* are, but be indeed the Impropriated and Honourable *Veſſels* of their dear Redeemer) *Satan* will do all the miſchief he can to thoſe *Vaſa ſignatu*, or *Sealed Veſſels*, as *Tertullian* calls them; thoſe *he* cannot *touch* with any of his Deadly Touches [*Non Tactu qualitativo*] as *Cajetan* interpreteth [*The wicked one toucheth him not*] 1 *John* 5. 19. He cannot cauſe them to *fall finally*. The Serpent is confined to feed upon the *Duſt* or *Dirt* of the Earth (that is, the *wicked*) he is not allowed to devour the *Herbs* of Grace, or to deſtroy any Plants on God's holy Mountain, *Iſa.* 65. 25. *God hath ſet the godly man apart for himſelf*, *Pſal.* 4. 3. and God's charge is upon the God of this World (as the *Devil* is call'd,

2 *Cor.*

2 *Cor.* 4. 4. as well as upon the *Kings of the Earth, to whom* thoſe words were ſpoken [*Touch not mine Anointed ones, and do my Prophets no harm*] *Pſal.* 105. 15. To ſay, this is ſpoken of Kings, and not to Kings, is a falſe interpretation. How far this *wicked one* may touch a Saint of God, and that maliciouſly and miſchievouſly; yea how far he touched our Saviour himſelf, is aboveſaid. Now the *Enquiry* is, ſeeing *Satan* is ſo *univerſally* miſchievous both to *Saints*, as well as to *Sinners*, how far *Satan* can force a Saint to ſin againſt God? *Anſ.* We have all great cauſe to bleſs the Lord our good God, that this Power of Darkneſs cannot force us to any work of Darkneſs; no, God hath left this Power of conſtraining us to ſin out of the Devil's Charter; he hath no Commiſſion to force the Will of Man; he hath indeed a **perſwading** *ſleight*, but he hath not any *enforcing might*. 'Tis true, we read [that *Satan provoked David to ſin againſt God*] 1 *Chron.* 21. 1. that is, he ſo dogg'd *David* daily with his Temptation, and would never let him alone in any Reſt, until he had faſtned it upon his heart, and gained his conſent. However, the Great God had his holy hand in all this, who ſtill held this *Dog*, this *Doeg*, the *Devil*, in his Chain, 2 *Sam.* 24. 1. *God did*, and *Satan* did alſo,

but how? it was thus, God was angry with *Israel* for abusing their Peace and Plenty, *&c.* and with *David* for his privy Pride and Creature-confidence, so he lets loose his Dog the Devil upon *David*, and he left *David* to himself so, as at last after his being very long provoked unto this curiosity of numbring the People, he yielded his consent to that *Satanical suggestion*, which brought the *Destroying Angel* upon his sinful Subjects, like as the Dog may be said to Bait the Beast at the Stake, while the owner of the Bast doth stand by, looks on, and suffers his Beast to be Baited. This plain similitude may serve to explain the difficulty, and to understand aright, that tho' it be said, that *God moved David*, and *Satan moved* him likewise, yet these two phrases are not contradictory Terms; they are not *Adverse*, but only *Diverse*, the latter being *subordinate* to the former, as all 2d Causes are *subaltern*, to the first Cause. But still *Satan* is held in God's Chain, and he cannot without Divine permission do the least damage to the Soul of a Saint; he cannot force us to sin, with all his most powerful provocations, as appeareth most plainly in the case of *Job*, against whom *Satan* made so many violent and furious Thrusts to make him *curse God to his face*; yet could he

he not conquer *Job* with all his provocations; but this good man comes off at laſt with flying Colours, and by the help of his God gets his Tempter trodden under his feet, as *Rom.* 16. 20. And tho' the beginning of the Conflict and Combat was *Satan's*, yet *the End* in the Conqueſt *was the* Lord's; as 'tis ſaid, *James* 5. 11. This therefore may be very comfortable for us ſeriouſly to conſider, that the Tempter may ſtrike fire long enough to no purpoſe, if we do not meet him with Dry Tinder for his ſparks to fall upon; for it is our own Concupiſcence that carries the chiefeſt ſway; 'tis our own carnal Corruptions wherewith we are *drawn aſide* and *enticed*, James 1. 14, 15. where the word is [Δελεαζόμενος] which ſignifies, we are caught as the ſilly Fiſh by the Fiſher-man's Bait. *Satan* is a crafty Fiſher, and knows what Baits will beſt tempt and take every ones Conſtitution and Humour; and tho' *Satan* be a Spirit, and therefore can have commerce with our Spirits, yea and may fix vain thoughts upon our fancies, yet he cannot force the Conſent of the Will thereunto; for as he cannot *know the Heart*, (which is only God's prerogative, *Acts* 1.24.) ſo he cannot compel the heart much leſs to any act of ſin, unleſs the *Eve* in us doth betray us into the Tempters

hands, as *Adam hearkned unto the Voice of his Wife*, Gen. 3, 17. Thus every Son and Daughter of *Adam* hath ſtill an *Eve* (his Tempter) in their own boſoms, and if *Satan*'s Temptation do fall paſſively only on our part upon the Tables of our hearts; it is indeed our Croſs, but not our ſin, if we conſent not to it; for 'tis our conſent to it, that makes it our ſin; as it was in the caſe of *Benjamin* before-ſaid; he never conſented to the putting of the Divining Cup into the mouth of his Sack; ſo it was his croſs only, but not at all his ſin: Therefore ought we in an hour of Temptation to do theſe two great Duties.

1*ſt*. To *give no place* to the Tempter, *Eph*. 4. 27. *no, not for an hour*, Gal. 2. 5. by *way* of *ſubjection*. And,

2*ly*. To *reſiſt* him, and he will flee from from us, *James* 4. 7. eſpecially if we *reſiſt him ſtedfaſt in the Faith*, 1 Pet. 5. 8, 9. even with a Reſolved Negative, No, No, *&c*. However, ſuch is *Satan*'s Hatred to all the *Saints*, that he will be *univerſally* miſchievous to them, and do them all the Damage and Detriment that he poſſibly can do; and as we may learn from the Story of *Balaam* the Southſayer (who was *Satan*'s Servant, when he cannot curſe the whole Camp of *Iſrael*, he will do his utmoſt endeavour to curſe

ſome

ſome part thereof, *Numb.* 23. 13, 27.

The 4*th* Curſed Character and Property of this *Adverſary* of Mankind is, he is *unceſſantly* as well as univerſally miſchievous. 'Tis ſaid of the *Scorpion*, that there is no minute of Time, wherein he doth not thruſt out his Sting, but he keeps it in a continual motion for a ſpeedy poiſoning of all whatſoever he can reach with it as before; even ſo this *Old Serpent* or *Scorpion* the Devil, is reſtleſs night and day, and puts forth his poiſonful Sting without ceaſing to *wound us* in our *Heels* (according to his Commiſſion, *Gen.* 3. 15.) that thereby he may transfuſe his Venom from our Heels to our Hearts, *&c.* And 'tis his conſtant cuſtom to Aſſault us both ſleeping and waking, for he keeps no holy day (as the Vulgar ſaying is) nor will he make any Truce, or Ceſſation of Arms with us; and he will ſet upon us, both in our *Natural*, and in our *Civil* Actions; yea and moſt of all in thoſe that are *Religious*. He doth not only tempt us to exceſs in our Food and Raiment; but he will diſturb us alſo in the Duties of our particular Callings, yet higher above all we meet with moſt Diſturbances in the Duties of our general Callings; ſo that we can never *ſerve the Lord* (either publickly or privately) *without Diſtraction* from this Ad-

verſary, 1 *Cor.* 7. 35. Neither *Week-day* nor *Sabbath-day*; nay, upon the Sabbath (which ſignifies a Reſt) is this *Satan* the moſt *Reſtleſs*; for while we are the buſieſt about God's Service, and the concerns of our Souls, then will he be a moſt *Buſie Devil* with our *Baſe Hearts*, to interrupt our Communion with Heaven, *&c.* This may have its Illuſtration from *Drexelius* his Viſion, whereof he gives us this account, [that he ſaw but *one Devil* at a Market upon the Week-day, but he ſaw ten Devils preſent at a Sermon upon the Sabbath-day] and being asked the reaſon of this difference of the number of Devils, the good old Man thus anſwered, That in a Market there was no need of any more than one Devil; for there one Man would tempt another faſt enough, the Buyer, the Seller, and the Seller the Buyer, *&c.* but at a Sermon, where all men do ſolemnly Devote themſelves to God's Worſhip, then ten Devils were few enough to diſtract them therein. Thus we read how *Satan* thruſt in among the Sons of God, *Job* 1. 6. & 2. 1. & 1 *Kings* 21. 10, 13. As Satan ever ſince the Fall of *Lucifer* never had Reſt, *Matth.* 12. 43, 44, 45. ſo he never would have Reſt night or day, unleſs he be in a ſinner's heart, *&c.*

The 5*th Curſed Character* and Property of

of this our *Adverſary*, is, that he is likewiſe *irreſiſtibly miſchievous* as to any *Humane Power* for *Reſiſting* him. This is related before, how the Innocenteſt Man *Adam*, the ſtrongeſt Man *Samſon*, and the wiſeſt Man *Solomon*, were none of them able to reſiſt the Aſſaults of this *ſtrong Man Armed*; the reaſon is, becauſe his *Angelical* (tho' now *Diabolical*) *Nature* is too ſtrong for any mere *Humane Nature*, we are all as unable to withſtand him, (1.) As the *feeble Flye* is the *cunning Spider*, which moſt eaſily entangles her in his clammy Threads (ſpun out of his own bowels) whoſe firſt work is to intoxicate her (as ſoon as entangled) by infuſing his poiſon into her head, and then with more eaſe he draws her into his Den, and there he ſucks out her blood and her life both together. Nor are we poor Mortals more able to reſiſt this *Strong Man Armed*, than (2.) The *ſilly Dove* is to withſtand the furious Aſſaults of the *ſtrong Eagle*, &c. Thus the *Devil* is repreſented in *Eph.* 2. 3. as a *Prince-Fowl* of the *Air* (who hath the upper ground of us ſorry Worms crawling upon the Earth) and prying about like a *Bird of prey*, to eſpy what *ſilly Doves without hearts* (or *underſtandings*, as *Junius* renders that, *Hoſ.* 7.11.) as are wandring abroad for him to be preyed upon, *&c.*

Nor

Nor (3.) The *ſimple Lamb* can withſtand the *furious Lion*, when found wandring aſtray from the Sheepfold, *&c.* Theſe ſimilitudes do illuſtrate how *Irreſiſtible* is our Adverſary as to us, to which many more may be added; As (4.) He is like the Hunter with his Nets. (5.) Like the Fowler with his Snares. And (6.) Like the Fiſher-man with his Angling-Rods. All theſe do moſt eaſily over-power the *Beaſts*, the *Birds*, and the *Fiſhes* they meet with; and ſo doth *Satan* over-power us; yea and much more than ſo, inſomuch as he finds ſomething in us which betrays us into his hands; tho' it be otherwiſe ſaid of our ſinleſs Saviour, to whom *Satan* came and *found Nothing in him*, John 14. 30.

The *6th Curſed Character of Satan*, he is *everlaſtingly miſchievous*; as he was a *Murderer from the beginning*, John 8. 44. ſo he will continue to be ſo to the end of the World, as is hinted before. Oh what a long Leaſe hath our Lord lent this Roaring Lion! The *number* of this *Infernal Beaſt* is much above the number of the *Apocalyptick Beaſt*, which was *666* years, *Rev.* 13. 18. or that longer Leaſe of 1260 years, *Rev.* 11. 3. This Beaſt hath already laſted above five thouſand years, and will *ever laſt* (out-living all the Sons and Daughters of Men) until Time ſhall be no more; for

for as he is a Spirit, ſo he cannot Die, as we mortals daily Die, *&c.* therefore Man's Malady and Danger is like to laſt ſo long as there is a Man living to be tempted by this everlaſting Tempter, until our Lord chain him up, *&c.*

CHAP. II.

Man's Remedy and Deliverer.

HAving ſhewed at large *Man's Malady and Danger* in the firſt *Chapter*, I come now in this *ſecond Chapter* to ſhew *Man's Remedy and Deliverer*, who is no other but our Bleſſed Lord, whom *Jacob* calls his *Redeeming Angel* [*the Angel that Redeemed him from all evil*] Gen. 48. 16. and who was named *Jeſus*, becauſe he came into the World upon this only Errand, [*that he might ſave us from our ſins*] *Matth. c.* 1. *v.* 21. This Name *Jeſus* may be derived from the Greek word [ἰάομαι] *ſano* to *heal*, or rather from the Hebrew word [*Jaſhang*] which ſignifies to *ſave*; from hence *Joſhua* is called *Jeſus*, in *Acts* 7. 45. for both thoſe names do ſignifie *Saviours*; and as that *Joſhuah* ſaved *Iſrael* by bringing them out of the Wilderneſs

derneſs into the *Earthly Canaan*; ſo our *Lord Jeſus* doth bring all the *Iſrael of God* (his *Redeemed ones*) out of the Wilderneſs of this *preſent Evil World*, Gal. 1. v. 4. (which is here below) into that heavenly *Canaan* which is above: And thus the Lord ſaith [*Vaani Jehovah Rophekah*] which ſignifieth [I am a *mighty Gyant like Healer* of thee, *Exod.* 15. 26. upon which Text *Tertullian* makes this learned and Holy Deſcant [*Omnipotenti Medico nullus inſanabilis occurrit Morbus*] unto ſuch an All-ſufficient Healer as our *Lord Jeſus* is, there is no kind of Diſeaſe can be found Incurable; and thus the Prophet ſaith [*By his ſtripes we are all healed*] Iſa. 53. 5. and tho' man have for his *Mallady Satan* who is call'd [λέων ὠρυόμενος] a roaring Lion *ſeeking whom* he may (not only bite or ſcratch but Devour, or drink up at one Draught, or ſwallow down at one Mouthful (as the word [καταπίν ſignifies) 1. *Pet.* 5. 8. Yet this is our comfort, that our Bleſſed *Saviour* (who is alſo [a *Lion, of the Tribe of Judah*] Revel. 5. 5. He is called [ὁ ῥυόμενος] one who *ſaveth us from the wrath to come*, 1 Theſſ. 1 10. Thus Man's *Remedy* againſt all his *Malady* is his *bleſſed Redeemer*; but more particularly even from the mouth of our dear *Redeemer* himſelf in his excellent *Parable concerning*

cerning the ſtrong Man's peaceable *poſſeſſion of his houſe*, until the *ſtronger Man* came upon him with a *writ of Ejectment* and diſpoſſeſſion of him, *&c.* Luk. 11.21.22. As the former of thoſe two *Verſes* holds forth *Mans Malady* and *Danger* (which is at large diſcourſed upon and diſcovered) ſo the *latter Verſe* gives a moſt clear demonſtration of *Man's Remedy* and *Deliverer*, namely *himſelf*, whom he calls the *ſtronger Man*, and moſt amply accompliſhed to effect a compleat Deliverance and Salvation for us ſorry Mortals out of all the before-named Miſeries. In both *thoſe Verſes* we may behold (as in a clear Looking-glaſs) and diſcerne *whoſe we are* and *whom we Serve* (as the *Apoſtles phraſe* is, Acts 27. 23. whether we belong to *Satan* ; or to our Saviour, *&c.* as we find the *witneſſings* of *Gods Spirit with our Spirits*, Rom. 8. 16. Concerning this *poſſeſſion* of the *ſtrong Man* and the *Diſpoſſeſſion* of him by the *ſtronger Man*, &c. as our *Saviour* calls himſelf in ver. 22. which doth repreſent *Gods*, *Champion* coming forth to redeem man fallen into miſery by the wiles of *Satan*, and one who will not be baffled in any of his *Undertakings*, for our Lord is called [*Mans Undertaker*] Iſa. 38. 14. and he ſaith likewiſe [*Oh Mankind, thou hath Deſtroy*

ed

ed thy ſelf, but in me is thy Help] Hoſ. 13. 9. or as another paraphraſtick Reading runs [*what hath Deſtroyed thee* even the mutability of thy *will*, Deceived by the grand Deceiver, who was by his Creation an *Angel of Light*, and propably one of thoſe *Sons of the Morning* who ſung Praiſes to the great Creator for the Creation of the Heavens *Job.* 38. 7. Yet afterwards by his *Luciferian pride*, Iſa. 14. 14. was changed into the *prince of Darkneſs*, Eph. 6. 12. that glorius Angel was Turned into a *Damned Devil*, and who firſt ſet himſelf againſt the *great Creator* himſelf, ſaying with proud *Lucifer*. Iſa. 14. 13, 14 [*Ero ſicut Altiſſimus*, I will be like the moſt High] and when he found that the *thing formed* was too weak *for Him* that *formed it*, and that the Potter had *power over the Clay*, &c. *Rom.* 9. 20 21. So that the Creature could not prevail againſt his Creator, then Satan falls foul upon God's Creature [*Man*] whom he ſaw Created in the *Image of God*, wherein he Acted like that *malicious Traitor*, who when his deviliſh deſigne was diſappointed of Aſſaſſinating the Kings Royal Perſon himſelf, he then falls foul upon the Kings Picture, and tears it all to peices. Thus the Devil did with the firſt *Adam* (who was *Gods Picture* by his Creation) and prevailed,

yea

yea and ſo, as that he prevailed not only againſt *Adams Perſon*, but alſo againſt all *Adams Poſterity*, by pouring his Poiſon into the Spring-head or fountain (as is demonſtrated before) as *Adam* was the publick Perſon, and Rrepreſentative of all the whole Race of mankind, hereby we are all *born Children of wrath*, Eph. 2. 3. *Enquiry*, how did the Creator take this *Affront* and *Indignity* done to him by the Devil in rending his Picture into peices, &c. *was God unconeerned?*

Anſwer the (1ſt) Indeed it was once at the leaſt a ſeeming Divine diſpenſation concerning bloody *Herods* Impriſoning and Beheading *John the Baptiſt*, that famous fore-runner of the *Worlds Reedemer*, yet all that time God ſeemed to be ſilent, as if not at all concerned therein, by any External or ſenſible Providence of God to teſtifie his diſlike and Abhorrency of ſuch a Barbarous murder, *Mat.* 14, 3, 4, 5, to the 13.th notwithſtanding Gods ſeeming ſilence as to *outwrrd Judgments* upon thoſe malicious murderers, the Lord gave an *Inward plague* in *perplexing Herods conſcience* for this bloody Butchery, *Luke* 9. 7. where the word [Διπόρει] ſignifies, that *Herod* [*pendebat*] ſtood amuſed and amazed and ſtuck faſt in the mud (as it were) and could not ſtir his feet, but

was

was ready to hang himſelf, as the words import; ſo in an angry Conſcience *Herod* heard an *angry God*, &c. But, *Anſwer the* 2d. As to this *Original Affront* of *Satan* to his *Maker*, in Defacing the *Kings Image*, by putting the firſt *Adam* to the Foil, and to that foul Fall, the *King of Kings* is moſt highly concerned, and comes immediately to the very place and ſpot of ground where this very Villany was newly perpetrated, Summons the Offenders perſonally to Appear, and He ſaith to *Satan* [well Satan, thou haſt prevailed indeed over the *firſt Adam*, notwithſtanding I have my Glorious ends in it. So to over-rule it as to bring forth the greateſt good out of that greateſt evil by the *Chymical Art* of my Unſearchable Wiſdom; but be it known to thee, I will ſend the *Second Adam* into the world, who ſhall not only match thee, but alſo over-match thee, he ſhall diſpoſſeſs thee of this thy new poſſeſſion. *The ſeed of the woman ſhall break thy Head*, though *thou* (by thy Serpentine ſubtlety) *hath now bruiſed mans Heel*, and put him into a limping and halting poſture, *Gen.* 3. 15. I *will ſend my Son* in the *Similitude of ſinful Fleſh*, who through *his Death* ſhall *Deſtroy him that had the power of Death*, that is, the *Devil* Hebr. 2. 14. and tho' *thou haſt ſinned from*

from the *beginning*; yet, for this purpose the *Son of God* shall be *manifested*, that he might *destroy the works of the Devil*, (as well as the *Devil* himself) 1 *Joh.* 3.8. Thus the *Everlasting Gospel* (as it is called, *Revel.* 14. 6.) was preached even by God himself in *Paradise*; and seeing God himself was the first Preacher of the Gospel, therefore that employ of *God's Embassadors* is very honourable Work, and not so contemptible as the blind World doth unworthily account it to be, *&c.*

Behold here, how our most Gracious Father in Heaven provides and prepares a most Sovereign *Plaister* (made up of the warm Blood of our Blessed and Bleeding *Redeemer*, who was the *Lamb slain* from the *Foundation of the World*, Revel. 13. 8.) So soon as the *Strong Man armed* had given this mortal Wound to the Root of Mankind, even to Innocent *Adam* in his Paradise-Estate, and this *Gospel of Peace* our good God himself did preach thus early, that none of the Spirits of his dear Children (though corrupted by the faln Nature) might sink in them. N.B. *Note well*, *Gospel*, quasi *God's Spell*, as if it were a Divine Spell of God's own ordaining, wherewith to catch that *Old Serpent*, the *Devil*, the good Lord teaches us to *spell* out the Glad Tidings out of this

Everlaſting Goſpel. [*When Men are caſt down, then ſhalt thou ſay*, there is a *lifting up*, Job 22. 29.] As the deſign of the firſt Chapter in this little Book was to *caſt down*, and to humble us miſerable Mortals under the ſaving Senſe of *Man's Malady* and *Danger* by the fall of the *firſt Adam*, by the deceitfulneſs of the Devil; and oh that many more of us were ſo ſenſibly caſt down and duly humbled. Accordingly the Drift and Scope of this *Second Chapter*, is for a ſeaſonable *lifting up* of ſuch humble Souls with the *Comforts* of the *Goſpel*, by repreſenting the true and only *Remedy* againſt this matchleſs *Malady*, to wit, our dear Redeemer. And to the ſame purpoſe is the purport of many Goſpel Parables, as thoſe *Three* of the *loſt Sheep*, the *loſt Groat*, and the *loſt Son*, from the *Hiſtory* of all which, I have opened (through Grace) the *Myſtery* in my *Fourth Volume*, upon *Luke* the 15th. But here I ſhall only demonſtrate how our Lord's *Parable* in *Luke* 11. 21, 22. hath the ſame tendency, holding forth to us, that though our *Malady be ſtrong*, yet our *Remedy* is *ſtronger*; that our *Lord Jeſus* is *ſtronger* to *Save* us, than *Satan* is to *Deſtroy* us; notwithſtanding this Prince of Darkneſs be a *ſtrong Man armed* as to himſelf, and hath likewiſe

likewiſe a whole Kingdom of Devils at his command to help him; yea, and moreover his fully furniſh'd Shop of this preſent evil World, wherein he hath at hand to take out all his tempting Tools, ſuch as the Scripture calleth the *Luſt* of the *Fleſh*, the *Luſt* of the *Eyes*, and *Pride* of *Life*, &c. 1 *John* 2. 16. I may ſay here as our Lord ſaid, [*What went ye out to ſee*, not a *Reed ſhaken with the wind*, &c. *Matth.* 11. 7. Behold here is *One* greater and ſtronger than *John* the *Baptiſt*, *Joh.* 1. *v.* 27. That famous Duel wherein *David* conquered the Great *Goliah*, was a reſemblance of this very *Parable*; and ſo was that ſharp Conteſt betwixt *Michael* the Archangel, and the *Devil*, *Jude*, *ver.* 9. but with this difference, that was only an earneſt Diſputation about the literal *Body* of *Moſes*; but this repreſents both a *Conflict* and a *Conqueſt* alſo concerning the Myſtical Body of the *Meſſias*. But that moſt Renowned *Narrative* and *Hiſtory* of the *Monomachia* or *Duel*, which was fought Hand to Hand, betwixt the two Perſons of *Curſed Satan* and our *Bleſſed Saviour*, as it is largely related in three ſeveral Rencounters, *Matth.* 4. 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, *&c.* All that whole *Hiſtory*, (wherein the very Abſtracts and Quinteſſence of Power and Policy, and of

Strength and Subtilty were engaged to their utmoſt one againſt the other, *&c.*) was a moſt evident Interpretation of the *Myſtery* of this *Parable*, concerning the *Strong Man armed*, and this *Stronger Man*, the *Lord Jeſus*, who is brought in *there* as *God's Champion* in the behalf of faln Man, who drove away the Devil from him, and defeated him in all his three Temptations, *Matth.* 4, *&c.* And the ſame Champion doth likewiſe *diſpoſſeſs* him of his *Palace here*, which Diſpoſſeſſion of the *Strong Man* by the *Stronger Man*, *Luke* 11. 22. is moſt elegantly illuſtrated by five famous Illuſtrations. As,

(1*ſt.*) By the *Quality* and Endowments of the Diſpoſſeſſor; *Chriſt* is ſtronger to help us, than *Satan* is to harm us.

(2*dly.*) By his *Aſſault* and *Battery*, he makes upon the *Strong Man*, poſſeſſing his Palace. [*He comes upon him*, &c.]

(3*dly.*) From his Conqueſt and Victory. [*He overcomes him.*]

(4*thly.*) From our *Lord's diſarming* his *Enemy.* And

(5*thly.*) From his *dividing the Spoil with the ſtrong*; as *Iſa.* 53. 12.

Thus it is made manifeſt how *Chriſt* comes to be called *Man*'s Myſtical *Joſhuah* and *David*, our *Goel*, our *Redeemer*, who *delivereth us from Wrath to come*

1 *The*

1 *Theſſ.* 1. 10. *Luke* 1. 75. And being *delivered* by him, therefore muſt we ſerve him in *Righteouſneſs* and *true Holineſs*, *Eph.* 4. 24. and that *all the days of our lives*; and that we may ſerve him the more chearfully without fear, we have this great encouragement, that *He* who is in us, is *ſtronger* than he that *is in the World*, 1 *John* 4. 4. This great Truth that *Chriſt* is the *Stronger Man*, may be thus demonſtrated: *Firſt*, That it is ſo: And *Secondly*, Why it muſt be ſo: For ſeveral *Reaſons:*

1*ſt.* Of the *Firſt*, That it is ſo, this is an apparent Truth, becauſe this *Prince* of *Light* did never Encounter with this *Prince* of *Darkneſs*, but he ever proved too ſtrong for him, and put him always to a moſt ſhameful Foil. As,

(1*ſt.*) Our Lord *met him in Heaven*, and thruſt him out for his Pride from that Holy Place. N.B. *Note well*, What was this Sin of *Lucifer* and his *Angels?* And what was the *ſpecial Object* of their proud Motion at the firſt in them? There be *Three* differing Opinions: The *Firſt* is, That *Lucifer* did Affect and Aſpire after an Equality with the moſt High God, *Iſa.* 14. 13, 14. The *Second* Opinion is, That he ambitiouſly endeavour'd to enjoy a *Felicity* in himſelf, without any depen-

dency upon his Maker: He would have had an Independent Bleſſedneſs, like that of *God* himſelf, *&c.* And the *Third Opinion* is, That he preſumed to have the Honour of the *Hypoſtatical Union*, which appertained only to the *Second Perſon* in the *Trinity*, namely, to the *Son of God.* The ground of this Opinion is, (as ſome ſay) That preſently after the Creation of Angels, the Creator did reveal this his purpoſe of making a *certain Man*, to whom the Second Perſon in the Godhead muſt be united, and that all the Angels muſt Worſhip this *God-man*, as the *Saviour* of the World; no ſooner did the *Prince* of the *Apoſtate Angels* underſtand this *Revelation* of the Will of God, but he refuſed to ſubmit unto this Law, and rather did challenge this Honour as due to himſelf. And this Conjecture ſeems to be the more probable, conſidering, that as God did give his command to *Man*, (as ſoon as he was created) and that a *poſitive Law*, [*Thou ſhalt not eat* of the *Fruit of the Tree of Knowledge*, &c.] and this Law was given to him for the trial of his Obedience to his Maker, *&c.* Even ſo God might give ſome *poſitive Law* likewiſe to the *Angels*, as ſoon as he had created them, upon the firſt Day of the Creation with the *Light*, &c. Now no *poſitive*

Law

Law can more likely be ſuppoſed, th
this (of *worſhipping the Son of God* und
his *Incarnation*) to be impoſed upon the
Angels; and if ſo, then this *Lucifer*, the
Devil, did moſt directly oppoſe himſelf
againſt the Perſon of *Chriſt*; and there-
fore *Chriſt*, to ſhew himſelf the ſtronger
of the two, did violently hurl him out of
Heaven, and together with him, all thoſe
other Angels, who conſented to his Am-
bition, and were Fellow-Conſpirators
with him in his Rebellion againſt his Ma-
ker. And

(2*dly.*) When our Lord had caſt *Satan*
out of *Heaven*, he afterward did oft meet
with him upon Earth; yea, even perſo-
nally, and proved ſtronger than he, put-
ting him to the foil at every turn. For
thus we are told, how our *Saviour* did
encounter *Satan* firſt in a barren Wilder-
neſs in his firſt Temptation; and then up-
on a Pinacle of the Temple in the *ſecond*;
and after this, upon an exceeding High
Mountain in his third Conflict, yet our
Lord *Chriſt* came off a Conqueror in all
thoſe three Combates, ſo immediately
ſucceeding one another, as they are rela-
ted by the Evangeliſts. Some may ſay
here by way of enquiry, how could *Satan*
become ſo bold and daring, as to grapple
with the ſame Antagoniſt upon Earth,

whom he had found too ſtrong for him in Heaven, *&c?*

The Anſwer to it is this, That our Lord now appeared as a meer Man, and therefore all the Tempters aſſaults ran, Thus, [if *thou be the Son of God*, &c.] now *Satan* had found himſelf not only a *Match*, but alſo an *Over-match* for the *firſt Adam*, and therefore he thought that he was ſtrong enough to grapple with the ſtrongeſt of *Adam*'s Off-ſpring; eſpecially, conſidering how he had long before this been able to maſter ſtrong *Sampſon*, &c. which might make him hope of prevailing againſt our *Saviour*, who now appear'd only in the *Form of a Servant*, Phil. 2. 6,7. and having his *Viſage marred more than any Mans*, Iſa. 52. 14. and 53. 2, 3. Inſomuch that the taunting *Jews* took him to be about *Fifty years old*, when he was not yet little more than *Thirty*, *Joh.* 8. 57. Hereupon *Satan* ventures to aſſault his *Perſon* with three various Weapons; to wit, the *Luſt* of the *Fleſh*, the *Luſt* of the *Eyes*, and the *Pride* of *Life*, hoping that though one of them did fail, yet the other might prevail, and the rather, becauſe he had found all theſe wicked Weapons ſo ſucceſsful altogether againſt our *Firſt Parents*; concerning whom we are told, how this ſame Tempter made them

long

long for the forbidden Fruit, (there was *Luſt* of the *Fleſh*) and he captivated and bewitched their Sight with the Beauty and Lovelineſs of the Apple (there was *Luſt* of the *Eyes*); and laſtly, he perſwaded them that their eating thereof would wonderfully Metamorphoſe and Change them from their preſent *Humane* into a *Divine Nature*, ſaying, *Ye ſhall be as Gods*, &c. there was the *Pride* of *Life*. Accordingly *Satan* improveth to his utmoſt, this ſelf ſame Method againſt our Bleſſed Saviour, the *Second Adam*; for firſt, he tempts him with *turning Stones into Bread*, when he was very Hungry after a forty Days faſt, there was [*Luſt* of the *Fleſh*]; though *Chriſt* could and would have done it at God's command, yet he abhors to do it at the *Devil's bidding*, as all *Satan*'s Slaves do, who win their Bread by Cheating, Oppreſſion, &c. *Satan*'s ſecond Aſſault againſt our *Saviour*, was concerning *Luſt* of the *Eyes*, when he ſhewed a Map of all the glittering Glories of this Evil World to our Saviour's ſight, ſaying to him, [Hæc omnia tibi Dabo; *All theſe will I give thee*]. Our Lord look'd upon them, as indeed they were, meer *Shews* and *Shadows*, and juſt nothing, no more than bare Apparitions and Reſemblances of Worldly Glory, which

which is expreſſed [μετὰ πολλῆς φαντασίας] *Acts* 24. 23. All *Agrippa*'s Pomp was but a meer *Phancy*. Though all theſe Glories were no more than ſorry *Schemes* or *Mathematical Figures* without any Solidity or Subſtance to affect our Saviour's ſight; yet he tells us himſelf, how *his Spouſe* did *raviſh his Heart* with the *Beauty* of one *Saving Grace*, *Cant.* 4. 9. Our Lord valued this Image of God more than that offer of *Satan* to him, to make him the *Great Pope*, as ſome do Interpret that place, *Luke* 4. *ver.* 5, 6, 7. Now, when our *Saviour* had put *Satan* to the foil in this *Second* Aſſault, as the Evangeliſt *Luke* doth rank them in his Sacred Record, *Luke* 4. After this the Tempter takes Chriſt up again, and ſets him upon a *Pinacle* of the Temple, *&c. Ver.* 9, 10, 11, 12. and tempts him to *fly in the Air*, (as *Simon Magus* was ſaid to do, *&c.*) and then would he act like the *Son of God* indeed, and appear to be ſo unto others alſo; and he promiſeth to him that the Angels would protect and preſerve him from harm in that preſumptious Action, *&c.* This was the Devil's thruſt at our Dear *Redeemer*, though this Maſter-fly, *Beelzebub* had been beaten off once and again, yet returns he the third time to the ſame place, and like *Potiphar*'s Wife

to

to *Joseph*, will be importunate and impudent notwithstanding all former flat denials, he sets upon and solicites our *Saviour* here unto that Sin, [the *Pride of Life*] but being vanquish'd by *Christ* this third time also, he at our Lord's Rebuke and Command to depart, then vanished away, and *Angels came* to him to comfort him with Food, *&c.*

Then (*3dly.*) When Christ had conquered *Satan* in his own Person, both in *Heaven* and on *Earth*, he comes forth as Man's *Champion*, and as the *Captain* of our *Salvation*, *Heb.* 2. 10: even in his Corporal Presence to Conquer him, and to Cast him forth out of others where-ever he met any that were distressed by the Devil, *&c.* It is said indeed [that *Satan departed from* our *Saviour* (who had conquer'd him thrice in his own Person upon Earth) *only for a season*, *Luke* 4. 13. shewing how restless this Tempter is, both with *Christ* himself, and with all *Christians*; after one Assault or two, or three, be over, we must expect he will still renew his Assaults and Batteries upon us; and therefore in a *Calm* we ought always to provide well for a *Storm*. Thus our Lord met the Devil again at many times, and in many places, having taken possession of many *Demoniacks* while he was here present

ſent upon Earth, and where-ever *Chriſt* met him, he did evermore *Diſpoſſeſs* him, as *Matth.* 8. 29, 30, 31, 32. and *Mark* 5. 4, 5, 6, 9. And many more Inſtances might be added to declare it; but this one may ſuffice, ſhewing how a whole *Legion* of *Strong Devils*, (which by common Computation amounteth to the number of Six thouſand armed Soldiers) all do jointly ſtoop and truckle to the Command of this one *Chriſt*, called the *Stronger Man*, *Luke* 9. 27, 30, 32, 33.

But (4*thly.*) and *Laſtly*, As *Chriſt's Bodily Preſence* was of ſuch a powerful and victorious Influence over *Satan*, during all the time that he *Tabernacled* among Men, as the word [ἐσκήνωσεν, *John* 1. 14.] doth ſignify, no leſs doth his Gracious and *Spiritual Preſence* with his Church and Children, to whom he ſaith, [Lo, *I am with you to the end of the World*,] Matth. 28. 27, 29. that is, I will ſtill charm and chaſe away Devils from you my Redeemed ones, I will not ſuffer *Satan* to devour ſo much as one of my Lambs; I *will loſe none* of that number which the *Father hath given me*, John 6. 39. and 17. 12. I will preſerve you from your Adverſaries, I will proſper you in your Enterprizes, I will protect you, direct you, comfort you; yea, I will carry on the Work of Grace in

in you, and at the laſt Crown you with Glory. All this, and more is included in this precious Promiſe, *&c.*

Now having diſpatched the *firſt Demonſtration*, ſhewing how it is made manifeſt in a manifold manner; namely, in a *fourfold Reſpect*, both in *Heaven* and upon *Earth*, both in his *Perſon* and in his *Spirit*, *&c.* that *Chriſt* is the *ſtronger Man*, and too ſtrong for this *ſtrong Man*, *Satan*, tho' he be *armed* Cap-a-pee from head to foot. Now I come to the *Second Demonſtration*, to ſhew the *Reaſon* why it muſt be ſo.

The firſt *Reaſon* is, The *Creator* muſt be too ſtrong for the Creature: Now that *Chriſt* was the Devil's Creator, appeareth by many Scriptures; as by *John* 1. 3. and by *Col.* 1. 16. and by *Heb.* 1. 2, 3. All which places do declare the *Deity* of *Chriſt*, for none can have a Creating-power, ſave only the Omnipotent God, who can bring all things out of nothing: Now all things, whether *Viſible* or *Inviſible*, whether they be *Thrones*, or *Dominions*, or *Principalities*, (which is one of *Satan*'s names, *Eph.* 6. 12.) or *Powers*; all *things* were *created* not only *by* him, but alſo *for him*, Col. 1. 16. and if ſo, it muſt follow, that the *Devil* is one of *Chriſt*'s Creatures, and not only made by him,

but

but alſo *for him*, that is, for accompliſhing the ends of *Chriſt*'s Glorious Will, or as it is expreſſed, [all were *created* for the *Pleaſure* of *Chriſt*] *Revel.* 4. 11. Now ſhould the Devil be too ſtrong for *Chriſt*, this could not be Chriſt's *Pleaſure*, but his Pain and Torment to be *maſtered* by another, and brought into Subjection, *&c.* This the Adverſary himſelf doth acknowledge in his ſaying to Chriſt, [*Art thou come to Torment us before the time?*] Mat. 8. 29. wherein he owned not only that *Chriſt* was over-powerful for him, but alſo that to be over-powered, and to be diſpoſſeſſed too, could not be accounted any pleaſure to him, but his great torment to be *caſt out* of his *Palace*, and to loſe the place of his pleaſure. Thus it may eaſily be concluded, that *Chriſt* muſt be ſtronger than his *Creature*, otherwiſe the Creature would not be for his *Pleaſure*; it muſt be *Pain* for a *Superior* to be ſubdued by an *Inferior*: A noble Prince by a baſe Peaſant, a Priſoner, *&c.*

The ſecond Reaſon, why *Chriſt* muſt be ſtronger than *Satan*, is, becauſe *Chriſt* is likewiſe the *Upholder* of all created Beings; 'tis ſaid, [*Chriſt upholdeth all things* by the *Word of his Power*, Hebr. 1. 3. As 'tis ſaid, [The *Father made the Worlds by his Son*] ver. 2. and [*without him nothing was*

was made that was created] John 1. 3. The Son of God was not idle, or unconcerned in the first Creation, but was a *Co-Agent* with the *Father*, and the *Spirit* in that Almighty Work, *&c.* So here he is brought in as an *upholder of all things* by the Word of his Power, in the Almighty Works of his *Providence*; and he *upholds* all created Things, both *Secundum suum esse*, *& secundum suum operari*, (as the Schoolmen's Phrase is) that is, *Christ* upholds all things, both as to their Beings and Essence, and as to their Actings and Operations. So that the Fire cannot burn, *&c.* without the Divine Concourse of *Christ*, as both in the Case of *Moses Bush* which *burned*, but was not *consumed*, *Exod.* 3. 2. And in the Case of those three *Nobles of Babylon*, who were cast into the exceeding *hot fiery Furnace*, but the Fire had no power over their Bodies, nor was *one Hair of their Head singed*, &c. *Dan.* 3. 23, *&c.* How came this to pass? We are told there, that the *Son of God* made the *fourth Man* among them, and restrained the fury of those Flames, so that not any *smell of burning* was *upon them*, Ver. 24, 25, 26, 27. Where we are told how *Nebuchadnezzar* heard the *three* Men praising God in the Fire, (as the Septuagint saith there)

and

and he ſaw the *fourth* as their Redeemer. All which do clearly declare, That the *Devil* (but a Creature) is upheld by *Chriſt*, both in his Being, and in his Acting: He could not harm an Hog without asking leave from his Lord, [ſuffer us to go, *&c. Matth.* 8. 30, 31, 32.] much leſs any *Lamb of Chriſt*, who lends him his leave, *&c.* Now the *Borrowing-power* can never be *too ſtrong* for the *Lending-power*, &c.

CHAP. III.

The Redeemed are Conquerors.

THis Third Chapter doth demonſtrate that *Chriſt* is ſtill the *ſtronger Man* by his *Spiritual Preſence* in all his Redeemed, making them more than *Conquerors*, through his Love to them, *Rom.* 8. 37. and he will continue to be ſo with them to the end of the World, *Matth.* 28. 20. The Reaſon whereof is rendred, [*For he that is in us, is greater than he that is in the World*] 1 John 4. 4. The *Greek* word is, [μείζων] that is, *greater* in *Strength*; of the ſame Senſe with [ισχυεστερος] the *ſtronger Man*, *through*

Luke 11. 22. Who enabled the Apoſtle to ſay, [ἰσχύω] *I can do all things through Chriſt that ſtrengthens me*] Phil. 4. 13. And thus our Lord out of love doth ſtrengthen all his Members, (as he is their Head) to conquer and overcome all thoſe Difficulties that they meet withal in *running* their *Race which is ſet before them*, Hebr. 12. 2. That *no man* (nor Devil) *may take their Crown*, Rev. 3. 11. The firſt *Enquiry* is, What be the caſes of Difficulty, wherein the ſtrong Redeemer doth aſſiſt his weak redeemed Ones to become Conquerors by his aſſiſting Love? *Anſwer*, This Work of Love he worketh for us in Seven ſeveral Caſes. As

Firſt, *Chriſt enables* us for *performing* of *Duties*, which ſhould be *wrought in God*, John 3. 21. both *quoad fontem*, from a *right Principle*; and *quoad finem*, for a *right End*; yea, and *quoad regulam*, by a right Rule alſo; otherwiſe, while we write up *Service*, God may write up *Sin*; *ſplendida peccata*, ſhining Sins in a ſilken Suit, *&c. Zech.* 7. 8. When we go not forth in the *ſtrength of the Lord* to Preach, Pray, *&c. Pſal.* 71. 16. The *Lord helpeth the Levites to bear the Ark*, &c. 1 *Chron.* 15. 26. And *God's Spirit helps our Infirmities* in praying-work, *Rom.* 8. 26. The word [συναντιλαμβάνεται] which

is translated only [*helpeth*] signifies much more; namely, to bear up the heavier end of our praying-work. And where the *Spirit* of the Lord is, there is *liberty* and freedom for performing of Duty, 2 *Cor.* 3. 17. If *Christ free us*, we *are free indeed*, John 8. 36.

Secondly, For *exercising of Graces*; 'tis not enough for us to have the *Habits* of Grace, but 'tis *Christ*'s work to actuate them, and to draw them forth into acts and exercises, not one grace can *suspirare* [breathe forth any fragrancy, unless *Christ's Spirit* do *inspirare* [breathe upon them. Alas, all *Habits of Grace* do lay dormant in us in the case of Divine Desertion (as those in holy *David* did while God was departed from him during his ten Months, *&c.*] and the *Spouse* was sensible of this danger, when she so earnestly prayed [*Awake, O North-wind, and come thou South, blow upon my Garden*, that the *Spices thereof may flow forth*] Cant. 4. 16. Never did the ground stand in more need of the *sweet Influences* of the *Pleiades*, Job 38. 31. or Garden of *April showers* to bring forth *May flowers*, &c. than our Hearts and our Habits of Grace do of the Spirit's Influence to come down upon us like *Dew upon the mown Grass*, and like *Showers that water the Earth*, Psal. 72. 6.

'Tis

'Tis said [*the Spirit of God did move upon the face of the first deformed Chaos*, and Gen. 1. 2. and thereby brought forth gradually a Beautiful World: So no better are our Hearts and Habits, until the Spirit descends as a *Dove* upon us, and *give more grace*, James 4. 6.

Thirdly, Our Lord stengthens us for *bearing Affliction*, which every *good Soldier* of *Jesus Christ* ought to do, 2 *Tim.* 2. 3. ὑπομεινον] *endure* all evils. Now this cannot be done but by *vertue* of *having fellowship with Christ in his sufferings*, Phil. 3. 10. and where there is not first an *Union*, there cannot be any *Communion* or fellowship; we must first be *united* to *Christ* as to our Head, and then he communicates ability to his Members, even to *trust* in a *killing God*, as *Job* did, *c.* 13. 15. because *Christ* bears up the heavier end of the Cross, as is shewed in that Resemblance of *Simon's bearing the Cross after Jesus*, Luke 23. 26. The heavier end of the Cross lay upon *Christ*'s own shoulders; So *Simon* (in his fellowship with his Saviour in his sufferings) did but carry the small lighter end of the Cross after him: Thus our *Lord* doth more than *line our Crosses for us*, to make them softer, and less galling to our tender Tempers, but he hath taken away the Curse of every Cross, and

hath made them more *Medicinal* than *Penal*; ſo that we may now read *Divine Faithfulneſs* in them, as *David* did, *Pſal.* 119. 71, 75. 'Tis a *filling up Chriſt's Afflictions*, Col. 1. 24. A Chip of Chriſt's Croſs doth dulcifie the bitter Waters, as *that Tree did Marah*, Exod. 15. 25, 26. That *Glukuzar* or *Liquorice Tree*, might be a *Type* of the *Croſs* whereon *Chriſt* was Crucified: And we find upon Record, how the ſweet preſence of *Chriſt* with the Three Nobles of *Iſrael*'s Captives in *Babylon*, did even ſweeten to them thoſe Bitter Flames in the Furnace of Fire, as before, *Dan.* 3. 25, 28.

Fourthly, *Chriſt* the ſtrong Redeemer cauſeth his Redeemed Ones to be Conquerours alſo in *Reſiſting Temptations*; for he having before-hand broken the *Serpent's Head*, Gen. 3. 15. doth only leave *Tail-Temptations* for the *exerciſe* of their *Graces*, and not for the deſtruction of their Souls. He hath engaged his own Holineſs and Fidelity for aſſuring us of this great Truth, in that truly Golden Promiſe, 1 *Cor.* 10. 13. where he ſaith [That *we ſhall not be tempted above what we are able*, for he is *faithful*, and he will *make a way* to eſcape, (tho' we cannot make any ſuch way for our own Deliverance) and that none ſuch Tryals ſhall come upon us, but what

what are *common* and incident to *God's deareſt Children.* He will not *lead us into any untrodden paths*, but only into ſuch ways, wherein the great Friends and Favourites of Heaven have gone before us, whoſe *footſteps we are commanded to follow*, Cant. 1. 8. and Heb. 6. 12.] Yea and he hath aſſured praying Souls, [that *his Grace ſhall be ſufficient for us*] 2 Cor. 12. 7, 8. and that he will *Rebuke Satan* that *Reſiſts us*, Zech. 3. 1, 2, 3, &c. which he can eaſily do, as having him in a Chain; and 'tis but taking up a Link or two thereof, then our Souls are ſafe, &c.

Fifthly, He makes them Conquerours in *mortifying Corruptions*; from which none (even thoſe of the higheſt Form) are not exempted; *Elijah*, *Paul* and *Barnabas* were *ſubject* to the *like paſſions* with others, *Acts* 14. 15. and *James* 5. 17. The *beſt of Men* are but *Men at the beſt*: Therefore it is as great an act of miraculous Power to keep our little ſpark of Grace alive in the midſt of ſuch a vaſt Sea of Corruption, as it would be to keep a Coal-fire burning upon the ſurface of the Main Ocean. Our *Graces* (like the *Army of Iſrael*) are very ſmall, when our *corruptions*, like the *Syrians*, are ſo numerous as to fill the whole Country of the *Iſle of Man*, 1 Kings 20. 27. therefore is it ſaid,

that the *Righteous are ſcarcely ſaved*, 1 Pet. 4.18. that is, they have much ado, and meet with many difficulties before they can reach to Heaven; and *Solomon* ſaith, [He that *truſts his own heart is a fool*] Prov. 28.26. Notwithſtanding all this, tho' our corruptions have *Iron Charets*, and be *too ſtrong for us*, yet are they not too ſtrong for this *ſtronger Man*, Joſh. 17.16, 18. and Judg. 1.19. We muſt ſay with *John Baptiſt* [He is ἰσχυρότερος, mighty or ſtronger than I] *Mat.*3.11. And what *Anakims* or Gyant-like corruptions were ever able to ſtand before his *Mortifying Spirit*? Rom. 8.13. his Promiſe, [he will *ſubdue our Iniquities*] Mich. 7.19. where the Hebrew word [*Chabaſh*] doth not ſignifie ſimply to *ſubdue*, but *vi, & violentia ſubjugabit & conculcabit*] that is, [*Jikboſh Gnavonthenu*, Hebr.] he will tread our *Corruptions* down by force and violence, and will *perform with his hand*, what his *mouth hath ſpoken*; He *will do what he hath ſaid*, 2 Sam.7.25. 1 Kings 8.15. And, which is more than all this, God ſometimes doth give *pardoning Mercy*, where he hath denyed *prevailing Grace*; as this latter hath been withdrawn to *humble* the Saints; ſo the former is granted to *comfort* them, as in that double caſe of *David* and *Peter*; but then there muſt be ſome proportion be-

betwixt *ſinning* and *ſorrowing*; *Manaſſeh* had *greatly ſinned*, and was as *greatly humbled*. Oh! let all bleſs the Lord for this, that [*Sin hath not Dominion over us*] Rom. 6. 14. It may play the *Tyrant*, but never *Rex* or choſen King; it may come as a *Traveller*, as 2 *Sam.* 12. 4. but it cannot be an *Home-dweller*, or *Maſter of the Houſe*, in any truly gracious Heart, &c.

Sixthly, The next Caſe of Difficulty, wherein the Redeemer aſſiſts the Redeemed to become Conquerors alſo, is in maintaining their Communion with God. Alas, how heavy are our Hearts, [*Leve ſurſum, grave deorſum*] heavy things hang downward, as light things preſs upward, which our Hearts cannot do, having the Stone in them, the *Spouſe* was ſenſible hereof, when ſhe prayed, [*draw me, and we ſhall run after thee*] Cant. 1. 3. *Anſelm*'s *Bird* with a Stone tied to its foot, is a lively Repreſentation of this Caſe, no ſooner did the Bird eſſay to mount up toward Heaven; but the Stone at her foot did preſently pluck her down to the Earth. It may well be ſaid, [Oh, *how weak are our Hearts!*] Ezek. 16. 30. *Chriſt* ſaith to his Diſciples [*Can ye not watch with me one Hour*, the *Spirit* indeed is *willing*, but the *Fleſh* is *weak*] Matth. 26. 41. As if our Lord had ſaid with the kindeſt Can-

dour to them, seeing I find *willingness of Spirit* (so far as you are *renewed in the Inner-man* by the *Law* of the *Mind*) I will either strengthen you against the *weakness of the Flesh*, or I will pardon it; and not only so, but I will accept of your *willingness* to Watch and Pray, wherein your unrenewed part by the Law of your Members doth discover so much weakness. Thus our Lord excuseth their frailties of Flesh, whereof he minds them, lest they should *presume*, yet he most graciously owns and acknowledges the Bent of their Spirits, lest they should *despair*: The *purpose* of *our Hearts* must be to *cleave unto the Lord*, Acts 11. 23. and because we cannot duly perform it, for we cannot *serve the Lord without Distraction*, 1 Cor. 7. 35. Therefore we ought to pray with *David*, [*Lord, unite my heart to serve thee*] Psal. 86. 11. For a loose Heart, (that is not tied fast to God, can never abide at the Mark, but will start aside like a deceitful Bow, *Psal.* 78. 57. and *Hos.* 7. 16. Alas, never did the unruly Bullock stand in more need to be *bound fast with Cords to the Horns of the Altar*, Psal. 118. 27. than our Hearts do to be bound fast to God with the golden Cords of *Christ*'s Love in our Communion with him. And thus our Lord speak-

eth

eth, [*With everlaſting kindneſs have I drawn thee*] Jer. 31. 3. And [*I drew them with the Cords of a* (or ſuitable to a) *Man*, even with *Bands of Love*] Hoſ. 11. 4. Whereas God had complained of his People a little before this, [*that their hearts were divided*] Hoſ. 10. 2. becauſe *Anima diſperſa fit minor*; ſaith the *Philoſopher*, when the Soul is diſperſed among various Objects, it is thereby much weakened in its Actings. Whereas on the other hand, [*Vis unita eſt fortior*] an *Heart united* and firmly *fixed* to God, [as *David*'s Phraſe is) is thereby ſo ſtrengthened, as [to *cleave cloſe to the Lord*, for *he is our Life*, and the *Length of our Days*] Deut. 30. 20. Oh! happy are ſuch Souls that can carry on their Communion with God, be able to ſay, [*My heart is fixed*] as *David* ſaith three ſeveral times, *Pſal.*57.7. and 108. 1. and 112. 7. Yea, and can drive away wandring Thoughts in the Worſhip of God, as *Abraham* drove *away* the *Fowls* which did diſturb him in his ſacrificing Work, *Gen.* 15. 11. And likewiſe can anſwer diſtracting Fancies, as *Nehemiah* did his Adverſaries, [*I am about a great Work, and cannot attend you, why ſhould God's Work ceaſe, whilſt I leave it, and come down to you*] Neh.6. 3. 'Tis obſervable that *Honey* while it is boiling hot, will

will not be blown upon by any filthy Flies; nor would our Hearts be fly-blown by *Beelzebub*, the Prince of Flies, (as the Name ſignifies). If we could but keep them in a fervent Frame, *enditing good Matter*, as *David did his heart*, Pſal. 45. 1. Hebr. Margent, God commands us to be *fervent* in Spirit, *ſerving the Lord*, Rom. 12. 11. or we cannot keep in Communion with God; but neither this Work, nor any other can we do by any ſtrength of our own, yet may we be able to do all the Works of a Chriſtian through *Chriſt*, the *ſtronger Man*)*that ſtrengthens us*, Phil. 4. 13.

The *Seventh* and laſt Caſe of Difficulty in which the *Redeemer ſtrengthens* his *Redeemed* with a conquering Power, is in making their *Paſſage forward*, and their *Progreſs perfect* through the wayleſs and waterleſs Wilderneſs of this preſent *evil* World, (ſo called, *Gal.* 1. 4.) even into the *Heavenly Canaan*, yea, and home to their Father's Houſe. 'Twas God's Command, [*ſay to the Children* of *Iſrael* that *they go forward*, &c.] Exod. 14. 15, 16. Though there be a *Red-Sea* before, and an *Enemy* behind, and *mighty Mountains* round about; yet was there no cauſe of fear, becauſe *Chriſt* in the *Cloudy-Pillar* went along with them, and was preſent both

both in the *Van* and in the *Rear*. The ſame Office of Love doth the ſtrengthening Preſence of *Chriſt* do ſtill unto all the true *Iſrael of God*. This is ſhewed in *Hoſea* 11. 1, 2, 3, 4: where *Ephraim* the *Child*, the *Lord taught him to go*, or as [Ανεπαδισα] the *Septuagint* word there ſignifies) *to pace*, leaving his natural *Trot* in ways of Sin, intimating how God put him (as it were) into the *Traces*, as Horſe-Maſters do young Colts to teach them to Pace, *&c.* So God doth here [taking the Child *Ephraim* by the *Arms*, &c. Where beſide that notable Notion of teaching to Pace or *Amble* from the *Greek* Verſion, the *Hebrew* Text repreſents Chriſt as a *Nurſe*, bearing the *Nurſling* by the Arms, whereby ſhe ſupports the weight of his Body, then ſhe teaches him how to move his Legs forward ſtep by ſtep. Thus our Lord is ſaid, [to *guide our feet in the way of Peace*] Luke 1. 79. He doth ſtrengthen our *feeble Knees*, drawing us [*fortiter tamen ſuaviter*, ſtrongly, yet ſweetly] through the Quagmires of Croſſes by the *Cords of a Man*, Hoſ. 11. 4. that is, he Drags us not along like Beaſts, but he draws us gently endways by Means and Motives, ſuitable to the rational Nature of Man, even with *Bands of Love*, irreſiſtibly by the effectual workings of

of his Holy *Spirit*, which he hath promiſed to beſtow upon us, *John* 6.44. and 12. 32. and which the Spouſe prayed for, when ſhe found ſome Back-biaſſes, that made her hang backward in her Progreſs toward Heaven, *Cant.* 1. 4. Oh, bleſſed are they whoſe *ſtrength is in the Lord, they paſs on from ſtrength to ſtrength*, Pſal. 84. 5, 7. and grow *ſtronger* and *ſtronger*, Job 17. 9. Such do paſs from *Mithcah* to *Caſhmonah*, Numb. 33. 29. that is, from *Sweetneſs* unto *Swiftneſs*, as thoſe two *Hebrew* names do ſignify. They *lift up their feet*, and walk luſtily towards *Canaan*, as *Jacob* did after his refreſhing Bait of the *Ladder* at *Bethel*, Gen. 28. 12, *&c.* with 29. 1. Margent. Oh! happy is that Man [whoſe *right hand the Lord upholdeth* in his whole Work, as he did for *Cyrus*, *Iſa.* 45. 1. though *Abraham knew not whither he went*, Hebr. 11. 8. yet he well knew with whom he *went*] for he walked with God, as a Child in a Fathers hand, who hath promiſed to *ſave to the utmoſt*, Heb. 7. 25.

The Second *Enquiry* is, What *Conditions* doth our *ſtrong Redeemer* require of his *Redeemed*, that he may cauſe them to become Conquerors, *&c.* *Anſwer*, The *Conditions* are *Twofold.*

(1*ſt.*) We

(1*ſt.*) We muſt *keep conſtantly* in *God's Arms*, &c. And

(2*dly.*) We muſt wholly put on *God's Armour.*

Firſt, On the (1*ſt.*) of theſe briefly, we muſt keep conſtantly in *God's Arms*, for the *Eternal God* is *our Refuge*, and his *Everlaſting Arms* muſt be *underneath* us, *Deut.* 33. 27. God tells us, [that *our Hearts* are *weak*] *Ezek.* 16. 30. And *David* from his ſenſe hereof, crieth [*Have mercy upon me, O Lord, for I am weak*] Pſalm 6. 2. And hereupon it is the Churches Prayer, [*Lord be thou our Arm every Morning*] Iſa. 33. 2. otherwiſe we ſhall do nothing but ſtumble and fall, like weak Children, that love not to keep conſtantly in their Fathers Arms, but will preſumptuouſly be venturing to go alone, and ſo gets many a knock and blow, *&c.* oh how ſevere was God's Law againſt ſuch, ſaying, [*That Soul which dare do any thing preſumptuouſly*, doth *reproach the Lord* (as if ſuch ſcorn'd his helping hand) *and ſhall be cut off from among his People*] Numb. 15. 30. Our Lord tells us, That [*without Chriſt we can do nothing*] John 15. 5. that is, nothing after a gracious manner, neither acceptably or effectually, and therefore are we bid to *abide in the Vine*, ver. 7. and to abide in him,

1 *John* 2. 28. and yet *we can do all things by Chriſt's ſtrengthning preſence*, Phil.4.13: Alas,onr Bow (like that of *Joſeph*'s) *cannot abide in ſtrength*, unleſs it be *ſtrengthened* by the *Arms* of the *hands* of the *Mighty God of Jacob*,Gen.49.24. 'Twas not enough for *Joaſh* to put his hand upon the Bow alone, no, but the Prophet of God (who repreſented God himſelf) muſt *lay his hands upon the King's hand* alo, otherwiſe there can be no ſhooting to any purpoſe the *Arrows of God's Deliverance*,&c.2King.13.16. We are like little Boys learuing to write, who muſt have their hand guided by their Maſters hand. But *Secondly*, we muſt *put on the whole Armour of God*, Eph.6.12,&c. The *Reaſon* is, our Adverſary is a *ſtrong Man armed* even Cap-a-pee, from head to foot; and woe to us, if at any time he aſſault us when *weak men* and *naked*, ſuch are eaſily overcome by *High-way-men* in their Travelling-Journeys. 'Tis ſad to be inſenſible of our own *nakedneſs*, Rev. 3. 17, 18. Woful is our caſe if this *Thief in the night find us naked*, Rev. 16. 15. The *firſt Adam* made himſelf and all his Poſterity *naked* by eating forbidden fruit, *Gen.* 3. 7. he loſt the *Robe of Original Righteouſneſs*, both for himſelf, and for all that were in his Loins, as he was a *publick Perſon* and *Repreſentative* of all Man-

Mankind, *Adam's Nakedneſs* made him Run from *God* to *Satan* in his ſinful excuſes of his ſin, and in his *Fig-leave* coverings, *&c. Gen.* 3. 10, 12, &c. Now while we remain in this corrupt Root the *firſt Adam*, we are eaſily taken by this *mighty Hunter, and led captive by him at his will*, 2 Tim. 2. 26. The Greek word there [ἐζωγρημένοι] ſignifies *taken alive* in Hunting by this *Nimrod*] not to be preſerved alive, but to be deſtroyed, 2 *Pet.* 2. 12. without *Repentance unto Life*, Acts 11. 18. Thus likewiſe we are told [*How Aaron made the People naked*] Exod. 32. 25. ſo that a *double Nakedneſs* was upon them, both that from *Adam*'s ſin, and alſo by their own ſin of Idolatry, wherein *Aaron* was their Inſtrument. This *Golden Calf* did diveſt them of Divine protection, and expoſed them to the *Wrath* both of *God* and *Man*, as *Numb.* 14. 9. we become a *Break-faſt* to *Satan*, &c. And this our *Nakedneſs* God minds us of it. Again, *Ezek.* 16. 22. where both *Gnaram*, and *Gnarah* Hebrew, be uſed to intimate we are (in the faln Nature) not only *polluted* in our Blood (as is at large expreſſed in the beginning of that Chapter) but that we are both naked and bare too, that is, without Apparel as well as without Armour alſo; oh great miſery, *&c!*

N B.

N.B. Note well, ſeeing we are both *naked* and *bare* in the faln Eſtate, to wit, we are deſtitute both of *Apparel* and of *Armour*; Therefore in the *firſt place*, we muſt look out for ſome *Tight Apparel*, not only to cover our *Nakedneſs*, but alſo ſuch as may ſecure us from thoſe Storms which *Satan* (that *Prince* of the *Power* of the *Air*, Eph. 2. 2, 3.) will aſſuredly raiſe up againſt us: This our Lord ſheweth in his *Parable*, Matth. 7. 25. ſaying, [*The Rain* will deſcend upon our Spiritual Buildings, *&c.* Many a ſharp Shower will beat upon us and batter us; and becauſe the *Fig-leave Aprons* (which our firſt Parents made for themſelves) was not a ſufficient ſecurity to them. Hereupon the *Lord made Coats of Skins and cloathed them*, Gen. 3. 21. which was there a ſhadowing *Emblem* of the *Fleece* and *Skin* of the *Lamb of God*, we muſt be *counſelled to buy of him white Raiment that we may be clothed*, and that the *ſhame* of our *Nakedneſs may not appear*, Rev. 3. 17, 18. We muſt be *covered* with a *Covering of Chriſt's Spirit*, Iſa. 30. 1. and apparelled with the Robes of his Righteouſneſs, which is call'd the *Beſt Robe*, Luke 15. 22. and thus the *Bride* the *Lamb's Wife* had *granted to her* to be *arrayed in fine Linnen, clean and white*, which is [Δικαιώματα] the *Righteouſneſſes*

neſſes of the Saints, to wit, the *Grace of Juſtification*, and the *Grace of Sanctification*; and therefore the Greek word is put into the plural Number, *Rev.* 19. 8, 9. Oh pray over that Promiſe [*I will ſpread the skirts of my Merit over thee to cover thy Nakedneſs*, &c.] Ezek. 16. 8. and look upon it as a ſhameful thing, that we can (all of us) be wiſe enough to ſecure both our *Bodies* and our dwelling-houſes from all annoyances and harms to them, yet not be ſo wiſe for our *Souls*, but leave them expoſed to all evil; whereas we have need to be like *Noah's Ark*, that was pitched within and without, that it might be able to Ride out the Storm, *Gen.* 6. 14.

Now in the *ſecond place*, This double *Malady* muſt have a double *Remedy*, as we are both *naked* & *bare*, Ezek. 16. 22, *&c.* So when we are *remedied* of being naked of *Apparel*, then may we not *remain* ſtill *bare* of *Armour*; and this *Spiritual* or Myſtical Armour wherewith we ought to be furniſhed and fortified, do fall under three diſtinct denominations in ſacred Scripture; the *firſt* is, 'tis call'd the *Armour of Light*, Rom. 13. 12. ſo named, becauſe *firſt*, 'Tis only the *Children of Light*, ſo called, *Luke* 16. 8. *Epheſ.* 5. 8. 1 *Theſ.* 5. 5. who are bleſt and beautified with this bleſſed Armour; all the *Chil-*

dren of Darkneſs abide both *naked* and *bare*, and continue Slaves and Vaſſals to *Satan*, that *Prince of Darkneſs*, as before, 2 *Tim.* 2. 26, &c. But *ſecondly*, Becauſe thoſe Children are (or at leaſt ought to be) careful to keep this *Armour lightſom*, *bright*, and *gliſtering*, as indeed all the parts of this Armour are when they come firſt to them out of God's own Heavenly Armory, and of God's own *furbuſhing* and *poliſhment*. Now this very name [*Armour of Light*] doth moſt clearly teach us, that we ought to Exerciſe all the parts of this Armour duly and daily, and to keep them in perpetual *Uſe*, and never (out of any ſecurity or preſumption) dare to let them become Ruſty or ſoiled by our careleſs *Diſuſe* of them. Yea and (*3dly*) this is called [the *Armour of Light*] becauſe it gives a light and luſtre to ſuch as wear it; for the light of Divine knowledge teacheth us to walk [εὐσχημόνως] *Handſomely* and of the beſt form and faſhion as the Greek word ſignifies, *Rom.* 13. 13. Intimating, that we ought by the help of this Armour to lead ſuch convincing lives, *walk as children of light*, Eph. 5. 8. that all who *behold us*, *may then Acknowledge us*, that we are *a ſeed which* the *Lord hath bleſſed*, Iſa. 61. 9. and our *Light ſhould* ſo *ſhine before* Men, ſo, &c. as *that they may ſee our good*

works

works and Glorify our *Heavenly father*, Mat. 5 16. We ought to *ſhine* as *Lights* in the *midſt of a crooked* and *perverſe Generation*, Phil. 2 15. & ſo, as not only to *ſtop the mouths* of gainſayers from Reproaching us, 1 *Pet.* 3. 16. but alſo (to force their Mouths open in commending our *comly Converſation in Chriſt.*

The *ſecond Denomination* of this *myſtical Armour* is, the *Armour* of *Righteouſneſs*, which we are to put on us for our Defence both *upon our right Hand*, and upon *our left*, 2 Cor. 6. 7. 'Tis ſo called there, (1*ſt.*) Becauſe by the Bleſſed benefit hereof we are kept and confirmed in the *way of Righteouſneſs* and *true Holineſs*, Prov. 16. 31. *Eph.* 4. 24. And (2*dly.*) Becauſe *Satan* doth batter us both upon our *Right hand* and upon our *Left*, on purpoſe to drive us out of the good old and middle way, into the *Extremes* upon either hand; for this is the Tempter's wily Method, at the firſt to aſſault us with his *Flatteries* and Allurements, and when he finds himſelf baffled herein by this Impenetrable Armor, then his ſecond Aſſault is more furious with his *Frowns* and *Affrightments*; this was the Tempter's way of Tempting famous *Luther*, whom the *Devil's Patriarch* (the Pope) firſt *enticed* with great promiſes of preferring him to a Cardinals

Cap, *&c.* if he would turn Papiſt, *&c.* but when this great promiſe, *&c.* could not faſten upon him, then the *Pope* turned his Tone and Tune, and ſent forth his *Thundring Bull*, and dreadfully threatned to fall upon him foully with fire and ſword, if he perſiſted in his obſtinacy, *&c.* But brave *Luther*, being fortified with this Armour of Righteouſneſs; on his Right hand and Left returns this Anſwer [*Contemptus ad me Romanus & favor & furor*] that is, I do cordially ſcorn both the *favour* and *fury* of that Romiſh Beaſt, *&c.* Yea and the ſame Heroick Soul ſaith farther, [*Valdè proteſtatus ſum me nolle ſic a Deo ſatiari*] that is, I have ſolemnly proteſted that my God ſhall not put me off with ſuch low things as thoſe are which the Mock-Vicar of *Chriſt* doth now tempt me with.

But the *Third Denomination* hereof, it is called [the *Armour of God*] Epheſ. 6. 10, 11, 12. that we *may be made ſtrong in the Lord, and in the power of his might*, we are commanded to put on the *Armour of God.* It hath this name upon it; *Firſt*, Becauſe God (who is call'd [τεχνίτης] *Heb.* 11. 10. ſignifying a moſt curious *Artificer*) is the *framer* of *them*, as well as of the *Worlds*, and of that *City Celeſtial* and *without Foundations.* What was ſaid of

Moſes

Moſes's Tables of Stone wherein the *Decalogue* was written, that All was the *Workmanſhip of God*, Exod. 32. 16. The ſame may be ſaid of this *Spiritual Armour*; All the Furniture and Armory of Evangelical Graces wherewith we are defended from all our Spiritual Enemies, as they are called the *Gifts of God*, Eph. 2. 8. ſo they are truly the *Workmanſhip of God*, whereby we are ſaid to be *created in Chriſt*, &c. *verſe* 10. and become *partakers* of the *Divine Nature*, 2 Pet. 1. 4. And *Secondly*, We are bid to put this *Armour of God* upon us, becauſe we have a moſt Dangerous Devil to deal with, who is compleatly *Armed* to *Do Evil* to us (according to the Deſcant upon his name [*Devil*, quaſi *Do-Evil*] yea and he can *do evil* to us [*eminus*] that is, at diſtance with his *Fiery Darts*, afar off, *Eph.* 6. 16. as well as [*cominus*] that is, *hand to hand*, by his *Buffetings*, that the Meſſenger of *Satan* is ſaid to give the bleſſed Apoſtle (as it were face to face, 2 *Cor.* 12. 6, 7, &c.) which plainly demonſtrates that the *Devil* is got near at hand to us, and now doth grapple with us as a *Wreſtler*, who takes hold of the Arms of him with whom he wreſtles; and thus 'tis ſaid [*We wreſtle not with fleſh and blood*, but *with principalities and powers*, &c.] Eph. 6. 12. ſo that

he *doth evil* to us, not only *at a diſtance*, as he is *Prince of the power of the Air*, (and ſo hath the upper ground of us poor Worms crawling upon the Earth) from whence he throws his fiery Darts at us, as *Saul* did his *Javelin* ſeveral times at *David*, &c. but alſo *near hand*; for *Job* by Divine permiſſion was within *Satan's Touch*, Job 1. 11. & 2. 5. where *Satan* begs leave of the Lord to let him touch *Job*'s perſon as well as his goods and children with ſome of his *pernicious Touches*; but tho' we be within the *Tempter's Touchings* (in his *walking to and fro ſeeking whom he may devour*, 1 Pet. 5. 8.) yet bleſſed be the Lord for his *Divine Grace*, that this *wicked one cannot Touch* ſuch as *are born of God* with any of his *Deadly Touches*, 1 John 5. 18, 19. However it moſt highly concerns us, that we be not found of him *naked* and *unarmed*. Alas how eaſily did *Cain* prevail againſt *Abel* whom he found in the Field unprepared for Reſiſtance, *&c?* and how eaſily did *Simeon* and *Levi* (thoſe two *Brethren* in *Iniquity*) prevail againſt *Shechem* and his Citizens whom they ſurprized at unawares, and altogether unable to defend themſelves, being ſtill very ſore with their Circumciſion, *Gen.* 34. 25. *Solomon* ſaith [*Poverty ſhall come upon Idle one*

like an Armed Man, Hebr. *A Man of Shields*] Prov. 6. 11. that is, it comes with ſo much force and violence, as it cannot be either avoided or averted, &c. Now if ſo much be ſaid of *ſuch a thing* as *Poverty* or *Want*; how much more may be affirmed of ſuch a perſon as this Prince of Devils and Darkneſs, and the *God of this World*, Matth. 12. 24. and 2 *Cor.* 4. 4. who is ſuch a Mark's man as can ſling his Stones of Temptation even to an *hair's-breadth* and not miſs, as *Judg.* 20. 16. yea and can ſhoot his Arrows with ſo much accuracy and exactneſs, as to wound us between the *Joynts of our Harneſs*, as as *Ahab* was, 1 Kings 22. 34. And if ſo, then much more when he ſurprizeth us either *Napping* or *Naked*, or *both*: Therefore our Lord makes an open proclamation [*What I ſay unto you, I ſay unto all, watch, that none be found ſleeping*] Mark 13. 36, 37. And the Apoſtle *Peter* publiſheth by ſounding of his Trumpet, and crying, *Arm, Arm, Arm, your ſelves*, [Ὁπλίσασθε] 1 *Pet.* 4. 1. in general to all.

This brings us to the third particular, to wit, we muſt not only *Arm our ſelves*, and put on the *Armour of Light* and of *Righteouſneſs*; but we muſt put on the *whole Armour of God*, as they are diſtinctly

deſcribed in order one after another, Eph. 6. 11, to 19. where the *Apoſtle* having before appointed all ſorts of Chriſtians their Ranks in all their reſpective Relations, and had declared to them their Relative Duties in their ſeveral Reſpects; then he purſues his Divine Documents, how they muſt be compleatly armed Cap-a-pee, from Top to Toe, intimating, that without this *whole Armour*, we can neither keep our Relative Ranks religiouſly, nor do our reſpective Duties (as thoſe that are *Superiour* of Parents, Maſters and Husbands, *&c.* and *Inferiour*, as Wives, Children and Servants, *&c.* or *equal*, &c.) in a way either pleaſing to God, or profitable to man, *&c.* from *ver.* 22, of Chap. 5. to *ver.* 10 of Chap. 6.

Now this *Chriſtian Armour* (ſo highly honoured with thoſe three Titles, the Armour of *Light*, of *Righteouſneſs*, and of *God*) the ſame Apoſtle lets us know all the parts of the whole, which he bids us to *put on*, particularly both thoſe parts.

1. That are *Defenſive*; and then,

2. Thoſe that are *Offenſive*: And firſt he begins with the *Myſtical Belt*, or *Girdle of Truth*, ver. 14. wherein he alludeth to that Military Belt which the Roman Soldiers did commonly wear, that was

was made up of Durable Stuff, beſet with many Iron and Braſs Plates, whereby their Loins, and the upper part of the Belly (which is moſt eaſily wounded) were well armed and ſecured from Harm: By this he reſembleth that *Golden Girdle* of *Truth* and *Sincerity*, wherewith every True Chriſtian ought to *gird up the Loins of his Mind*, Luk. 12. 35. 1 Pet. 1. 13. The Loins of our Worldly Affections may not be looſe and hanging down, *&c.* like looſe Garments down to the Feet, which will hinder the nimble motion of our Feet in *running* the *Race* that is *ſet before us*, Heb. 12. 1. Therefore we muſt *gird* them up with this *Girdle of Truth*, which makes us firm and ſtable in all our Religious Undertakings. That vulgar Proverb [*Ungirt Unbleſt*] doth aſſuredly hold true here, if ever; for they prove but looſe Profeſſors, who want this Golden Girdle, and only wear the Garment of Holineſs like a looſe Gown or Garment, to be *put on* or *caſt off* at pleaſure; ſuch an one is called [*omnium horarum Homo*] a man that can turn with the Times, and can ſhift and ſuit his Sails to all Winds and Seaſons, *&c.* whereas our Lord ſaith, that all his ſincere Servants muſt firſt *gird themſelves*, (to wit with this Golden Girdle of Sincerity)

other-

otherwiſe *we can never ſerve our Maſter* as we ought to do, *Luk.* 17. 8.

The *ſecond piece* of *Defenſive Armour* is, the *Breaſt-plate of Righteouſneſs*, ver. 14. which is the principal Defence for the *Heart*, the leaſt wound whereof is mortal: 'Tis the *primum vivens*, and the *ultimum moriens*, the firſt that lives, and the laſt that dies in the ordinary courſe of Nature; and therefore extraordinary care is univerſally taken to ſecure that *Fort-Royal* of Life the Heart. Now ſeeing the *Heart* doth ſignifie the *Conſcience*, [*if our hearts condemn us*, &c. that is, our *Conſciences*, 1 Joh. 3. 20. therefore how careful was this ſame Apoſtle to ſecure it with this *Breaſt-plate* of *Righteouſneſs*, ſaying [*I have lived* in all *good Conſcience*] Act. 23. 1. becauſe it was *good* with the goodneſs of *Integrity*, therefore was it good alſo with the goodneſs of *Tranquility*: And he farther tells us, how he made it his *daily Exerciſe* and *Recreation* (as ἐν τούτῳ ἀσκῶ ſignifies) to *keep his Conſcience void of offence* both *toward God and toward man*,] Act. 24. 16. Moreover he ſaith [*our rejoicing is this*, the *Teſtimony* of *our Conſcience*, that in *ſimplicity* and *godly ſincerity*, not with *fleſhly wiſdom*, but *by the grace of God*, we *have* had *our Converſation in the World*, and *more abundantly to*

you

you ward,] 2 Cor. 1. 12. but more of this after to this ſame purpoſe. *None-ſuch Job* ſaith [*My Righteouſneſs I hold faſt, and will not let it go,* my *Heart ſhall not reproach me,* ſo *long as I live,*] Job 27. 6. And *John* addeth his Verdict to this point likewiſe, ſaying, [*He that hath Righteouſneſs,* is *Righteous,* &c.] 1 Joh. 3. 7. that is, ſuch as have both the *Righteouſneſs imputed* in the Grace of *Juſtification,* and likewiſe that which is *imparted* in the Grace of *Sanctification*; theſe two are called [Δικαιώματα τῶν ἁγίων] the *Righteouſneſs of the Saints,* Rev. 19. 8. The original reading there is in the plural number: We all ought *to be unto God* what we *ſeem to be unto men,* and that at all times and in all places, and our *Conſciences* muſt *bear witneſs hereof* in the *Holy Ghoſt,* Rom. 9. 1. If ſo, this will be χείτων σίδηρεα, an Impenetrable Coat of Mail, and Armour of Proof, a moſt bleſſed *Breaſt-plate.* Thus far the Light and Law of Nature enabled the Pagan Poet to ſing,

—— *Hic Murus Aheneus eſto*
Nil conſcire ſibi, nullâ palleſcere culpâ;

that is, a clear Conſcience is as a *Brazen Wall,* which will beat back the Shots of a thouſand Reproaches and Slanders, *&c.*

and

and the Apoſtle better tells us, that this is an *Evidence of our Election*, 2 Pet. 1. 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10. If all be *well within* us, it cannot well be *ill* without us. Whereas on the contrary, if *Conſcience* be galled, 'tis with us, as with thoſe who have the Skin of their Backs rubbed off, or their Shoulder-blade disjointed; any lightſome load is very burdenſome to them, *&c.* This Conſideration cauſed *Paul* (who was in *perils often*, &c.) ſo careful of not *making Shipwrack* of *Faith* and of a *good Conſcience*, 1 Tim. 1. 19. for *Faith* is the *Jewel*, and *Conſcience* is the *Cabinet* wherein it is kept; and if this be ſafe, all loads on us will be lighter, *&c.*

The *Third* piece of Defenſive Armour is, [*having our Feet ſhod with the preparation* of the *Goſpel of Peace*,] ver. 15. that is, ſeeing there is much *hard Ground* as *Etham* ſignifies, betwixt us and *Canaan*, as it was *Iſrael*'s third Stage [from *Raamſes* to *Succoth*, and from *Succoth* to *Etham*, Exod. 13. 20. and Numb. 33. 6. yea, and many ſnares of Satan in our way to Heaven; and indeed every place in our paſſage thither is full of Briars and Bramble-buſhes, ſo that we have great need to be well-ſhod with Goſpel-ſhoes of *magnanimity* and *patience*, or we ſhall prove unlike to the Right *Brood* of *Travellers*, who

who travel luſtily home to their Fathers Houſe. We read in Scripture how *Goliah* had *Greeves* or *Boots of Braſs*, 1 Sam. 17. 6. And thus *Homer* characterizeth his *Græcians*, not only to be χαλκίτωνες, *Iron-ſides* (as is the Phraſe of our times) but alſo εὐκνήμιδες Ἀχαιοι, well-booted Soldiers, whoſe Legs and Feet were well ſecured from Hazards and Harms by Shots. Thus *Chriſtians* ought to be well fortified with *Goſpel-comforts*, (whereby God *creates peace* in the Soul, *Iſai.* 57. 19.) then may they trudge over hard ground with alacrity; yea, tread upon not only Briars and Brambles, but alſo upon *Lions and Adders* with ſafety; yea, that old Dragon the Devil himſelf, they ſhall *trample under foot*, Pſal. 91. 13. Mar. 16. 18. and Rom. 16. 20. *Paul* ſhaked the Viper from off his Hand into the Fire, *Act.* 28. 4, 5. Whereas on the other hand, oh how ſoon are the *ignorant*, the *timorous*, and ſuch as become aſhamed of their Profeſſion, put to the Foil by that old ſubtle Serpent, (who hath a liberty in his Commiſſion to *bruiſe* the *Heel* of the *Seed of the Woman*, Gen. 3. 15.) becauſe they are no better ſhod with the Shoes of Goſpel-peace: This is known by common experience, that thoſe who are tender-footed, or whoſe Feet are either

either beaten or bliſtered, cannot tread upon Stones or Thorns; they are *Halters* betwixt *God and Baal.*

The *fourth* piece of *Defenſive Armour*, is the *Shield of Faith*, verſe 16. which we are bidden [ὑπὲρ πάντων] above all, or *over* and upon all, to take and be armed with; intimating, that whatever other part of this Myſtical Armour we want, we muſt in no wiſe want this principal part thereof, for this doth cover and defend all the other pieces of the Defenſive Armour, becauſe a firm Truſt and Confidence in *God* by *Chriſt* doth after a ſpecial manner ſhelter, and over-ſhadow the imperfections of all our other Graces: And indeed this *Shield of Faith* doth not only defend our other Graces, but our ſelves alſo, as it takes hold of that precious Promiſe of *God* to *Abraham* [*I am thy Shield, fear not*, &c.] Gen. 15. 1. As if God had ſaid [thine Enemies ſhall firſt ſtrike through *me thy Shield*, before they can come to reach and wound thee, I will ſtand betwixt thee and all Danger] and the like priviledge of ſafety God vouchſafed unto *Iſrael*, ſaying, [as the *Eagle beareth her young upon her wings*, ſo hath the Lord born you, *&c. Deut.* 32. 11, 12. which alluſion doth imply, that no Shot can come to harm the young Eagles ſo carried, but it muſt firſt pierce

pierce and paſs through the body of the *Old* one. By all this it is apparent, how ſafely doth *Faith* lodge the Soul under the *ſhadow of the wings of Almighty God*, Pſal. 91. 1, 2, 3, 4, to 14. The *juſt do live by their Faith*, Hab. 2. 4. Nor is this all that the *Shield of Faith* doth for us, in ſecuring us from the Aſſaults of *Satan*, but it alſo *repels* and beats back thoſe Darts that he caſts at us; yea and yet higher, it moreover doth *quench* that *Hell fire* they bring along with them; for *Satan's Darts* are like thoſe (that *Hiſtory* mentions) of the *Scythians*, which were not only pointed and hardened in the fire, but they were alſo dipped in the *poiſon of Aſps*, and in the venom of Vipers, that they might the more horribly torture and torment thoſe Bodies that were wounded with them; even ſo *Satan* would torture and torment our Souls with his poiſon'd *fiery Darts*: The *Lord ſtrengthen our Faith*, whereby we may quench the fire, and antidote the poiſon, *&c.*

The *fifth* peece of *Defenſive Armour*, is the *Helmet of Salvation*, verſe 17. which the ſame Apoſtle helps to interpret this place, ſaying, [*Take for an Helmet the Hope of Salvation*] 1 Theſ. 5. 8. So that this *Helmet* here is the Grace of *Hope*, the office whereof is, to hold up our heads above

above Water, and raises up the Soul (*with an out-stretched neck*, as the Greek word [Ἀποκδεχόμενοι] Rom. 8. 23. signifies, which we read, *waiting* with *groans* for the *Adoption*, to wit, the *Redemption of the Body*. And the next words *there* are [*for we are saved by hope*, &c. and *if we hope for that we see not, then do we with patience wait for it*] verse 24, 25. *Hope* is the Daughter of Faith, its Mother; yet is it as a *staff* for its Aged Mother to lean upon: By *Faith* we believe the *Truth of*, and our own *Title to* those blessings that we are not yet possessed of, and by *Hope* we *patiently wait for* that which we *believe shall surely come to pass*: And when they but begin to do so, then *Hope looketh up and lifts up the head*, because *our Redemption draweth nigh*, Luke 21. 28. 'Tis the excellency of *Hope* to take her Turns in walking round about the Streets of the *New Jerusalem*, and sometimes to sit still and sing [*adhuc mea Messis in Herba est*] there is yet an happy Harvest that is hastening in its season for me; *the Lord will hasten it in his time*, Isa. 60. 22. So I will hope against Hope, *Rom.* 4. 18. Yet more, this Hope is so excellent, that it is not only our *Helmet* by Land, but it is also our *Anchor* by Sea, *Heb.* 6. 19. By Hope we have our *Safety* here, and our *Salvation* hereafter.

hereafter, both are purchaſed by *Chriſt*, who has *ſecured* a full Victory over this *ſtrong Man* for us.

Thus far the *five pieces* of the *Chriſtian Defenſive Armour* reacheth; now the two following parts, namely, the *Sixth* and *Seventh*, are indeed *Offenſive Weapons*, as well as *Defenſive Armour*. As the former five were meerly, and ſolely for our *Defence*; ſo theſe two latter are not only for our own Defence, but they are alſo for *Offence* of our Spiritual Foes, to wit, the *Sword of the Spirit*, and *Darts of Prayer*.

The *Sixth Apoſtolical Direction* here for our being compleatly Armed in our Spiritual Warfare, is, *Take* likewiſe to you the *Sword of the Spirit*, which is the *Word of God*] Eph. 6. 17. As there is a literal and a *Carnal Sword*, ſo there is a *Myſtical* and a *Spiritual Sword*: Which Truth may be demonſtrated, *Firſt*, By that Example in Scripture-Record [And *it ſhall come to paſs, that him who eſcapeth the Sword of Hazael ſhall Jehu ſlay; and him that eſcapeth from the Sword of Jehu, ſhall Eliſha ſlay.*] 1 Kings 19. 17. the Interpretation whereof muſt moſt plainly imply, that *Eliſha* had his *Slaying Sword*, as well as *Hazael* and *Jehu*: And tho' their Slaying Swords were both of them *Carnal*, yet

this of *Eliſha* muſt be *Spiritual*, as he was a Prophet of the Lord, and more; yea and weilded no other Sword, but that which is called here *the Word of God*: And in congruity with this ſenſe the Lord himſelf ſpeaketh *Secondly*, [*Therefore I have hewed them by my Prophets; I have ſlain them by the words of my mouth*] Hoſ. 6. 5. Moreover a *Third* ſacred Inſtance gives a farther Illuſtration unto this Myſtical Interpretation, namely, [*If any man will dare to hurt my two Witneſſes, I will give ſuch a power to my Servants, that Fire ſhall proceed out of their mouths, which ſhall devour their Enemies; and if any man* (tho' never ſo *many* or ſo *mighty*) *will hurt them*, he muſt *in this manner be killed.*] Rev. 11. 3, 5. And yet to all thoſe three Quotations above-named, this Scripture is moſt expreſs for this Myſtical ſenſe, ſaying [*Take the Sword of the Spirit*, which is the *Word of God.*] There be ſeveral cogent and ponderous *Reaſons*, why the *Word of God* is called the *Sword of the Spirit*, &c.

The *firſt* is, Becauſe the *Spirit* was the *Artificer*, the curious Contriver, who framed and faſhioned this Spiritual Sword, the Holy Spirit hath the honour of making this excellent weapon ready to our hands; for thus we are told [That *no Prophecy of Scripture* came in *old Time*

Time by the *will of man*, but *holy men of God ſpake as they were moved by the Holy Ghoſt*, &c.] 2 Pet. 1. 20, 21. The word [Θεόπνευστοι] ſignifies that the Scriptures are *God's breath*, God made *them* as well as the Heavens, *&c. Heb.* 11. 10. with the *Breath* of his *Mouth*.

The *Second Reaſon* is, becauſe the *word of God* is *ſharper* than any *two edged Sword*, and pierceth to the *dividing* of the *Soul and Spirit*, &c. Heb. 4. 12. the *Greek* words ἐνεργὴς καὶ τομώτερος ὑπὲρ καὶ ζῶν, ſignifies 'tis quick, lively, cutting, powerful and *energetical*, when the power of the Spirit goeth along with it, as *Luke* 5. 17, &c. It will then ranſack the hearts even of wicked men, as it did to *Herod*, Luke 9. 7. it made him *ſtick faſt* in the *mud*, as the original word [διαπορεῖ] ſignifies, and as it did to *Fælix*, who was made to tremble thereby, *Acts* 24. 25. But as to the *Godly* who *tremble* at his *Word* and *Judgments* (as *David* did, *Pſal.* 119. 120.) God promiſeth to *lend a look of Love* towards them, *Iſai.* 66. 3.

The *Third Reaſon* why the *Word* is called a *Sword*, is, becauſe this *Weapon* of our *Warfare*, is not *weak* as *Fleſh* (oft called the *old man* for weakneſs) is, but it is *mighty through God*, to the *pulling* down of *ſtrong holds*, and *caſting down*

imaginations, and *every high thing that exalteth it ſelf* againſt *the knowledge of God*, and *bringing into Captivity every Thought to the obedience of Chriſt*, 2 Cor. 10. 4, 5. Therefore *Alexander*'s Sword wherewith he could cut the *Gordian Knot*, (as it is *famous* in Hiſtory) is nothing comparable to this Spiritual Sword that can work all thoſe Wonders before mentioned. We muſt ſay the ſame of this Sword, what *David* ſaid of *Goliah*'s *Sword, there is none like it, let it be given to us*, 1 Sam. 21. 9.

But the *Fourth Reaſon* above all is, this was the *Weapon* wherewith our *Lord Chriſt* did defeat and diſcomfit the Devil himſelf when he *warred this good Warfare* againſt *Satan*'s very *Perſon*, and that upon the Devil's own Dunghil, as he is called the *God of this World*, 2 Cor. 4. 4. We find in *Matt.* 4. and in the other *Evangeliſts* likewiſe, how our Lord (in his *Duel with the Devil*) made uſe of no other Weapon, but this *Sword* of the *Spirit*, the *word of God*, wherewith in three ſeveral *aſſaults* of *Satan* upon him, he repelled his Antagoniſt three ſundry times one after another, and that by anſwering all the three Temptations of the Tempter, only with [*ſcriptum eſt, it is written*] three times over: and which is remarkable,

markable, all thoſe three *Scriptures* wherewith our *Saviour* conquered *Satan*, were drawn out of the *Fifth Book* of *Moſes* called *Deuteronomy*. This, even this was the *great and ſtrong Sword* wherewith our Lord ſlaſhed, and cut in pieces that lofty *Leviathan*, that *old* and *crooked piercing* Serpent, as *Iſai.* 27. 1. As *David* (our Lord's *Father* and *Figure*) did chooſe ſome ſmooth Stones out of the Water-brooks wherewith he *fought* the *good fight* of *Faith* againſt that monſtrous *Philiſtin*, &c. 2 *Sam.* 17. 40. and he ſlings theſe Stones (out of the Sling of Faith alſo) at the very Face of the *Great Goliah*, and God himſelf going along with the Stone, it gave him a mortal wound, and made him fall flat down to the ground, ſo that the weight of his bulky Body, (eſpecially ſo loaded with ſo much heavy Armour) muſt make an horrible *Earthquake* by his fall. Even ſo our myſtical *David* here doth chooſe thoſe three ſmooth Stones out of the Silver Streams of the Sacred Scriptures, and with *theſe*, being ſlung by a Divine Art and Hand, he likewiſe knocks down the *Great Goliah* of *Hell*. All this doth teach us, that the Books of the Holy Scriptures are a bleſſed Armory, (far beyond that of *Solomons*, Cant. 4. 4. The Tower of *David*

vid was famous for a fully furniſhed Armory, as the *Tower* of *London* is now accounted the moſt famous Armory in the World for all ſorts of Armour, ſo comly fixed in a moſt beautiful order, which my Eyes have beheld with admiration) whither we ought to haſten in an hour of Temptation, and there we ſhall be furniſhed with this *Sword* to defeat the Devil, *&c.*

NB. Note well, (*1ſt*) That this Sword may have ſaving effects for our Souls good; we muſt learn from *David* to draw the Sword out of its Sheath, as he did, 1 *Sam.* 17. 51. that is, we muſt draw this *Sword* of the *Spirit* out of the *Sheath* of the Letter, and not make a Charm of the bare words thereof; for 'tis ſaid [the *Letter killeth*, but 'tis the *Spirit that giveth life*, 2 Cor. 3. 6. Yet 'tis the *Foppery* of *Popery* to uſe only a *wooden Dagger*, and a *leaden Sword* in undertaking to drive away the Devil, by making *Spells* of ſome certain Syllables of the Scripture, and by croſſing themſelves with the ſign of the Croſs, and by being ſprinkled with their Holy Water; yea, and by ringing their *Baptized Bells*, &c. Whereas, alas, 'tis not the *dead ſign of the Croſs*, but the *living Word* of the Croſs, 1 *Cor.* 1. 23, 24. the power of God, *&c.* that drives away the Devil; 'tis our being ſprinkled with

Wa-

Water of Life, even with *Water* and the *Spirit*, Joh. 3. 3, 5. and it is the ringing of *Aaron's Bells*, which typified the preaching of the Word of God) and which the Devil can no more abide than the *Owle* can abide the Light of the Sun, becauſe he is a Bird of Darkneſs. This was very apparent in *New England*, (as Mr. *Elliot* relateth the ſtory) that when the *Sun-ſhine* of the *Goſpel* firſt came into that Country, it ſo moleſted the Devil in his former quiet Habitations, that he departed thence with moſt horrible ſigns of his Diſpleaſure; and thus it is ſaid, that [*God ſmites the Earth with the Rod of his Mouth,*] Iſa. 11. 4. and likewiſe that [the *man of Sin ſhall be deſtroyed* with the *Breath* of *Chriſt's Mouth*, and *with the Brightneſs* of *his Coming*,] 2 Theſſ. 2. 8. 'tis the *Breath*, or *Spirit* (both which are of the ſame ſignification) of *Chriſt*, that goes along with his Word, which deſtroys the *Devil and his Works*, Heb. 2. 14. and 1 Joh. 3. 8. Luk. 5. 17.

N B. Note well, (2*ly*) How highly doth it concern us all to comply cordially with that *Apoſtolical* command [*let the Word of Chriſt dwell in you Richly*, Col. 3. 16. The Greek word [πλουσίως] there doth intimate, that we ought to have an *Holy Covetouſneſs* of heaping up an hoard

of the Sacred Scriptures, and locking them up in the Cabinet of a *Sanctified Memory*, &c. as we all naturally can be careful and covetous enough for heaping up the Coin of Gold and Silver, and ſecuring the ſame under Locks and Bolts, &c. As we do this latter, that we may duly and daily fetch out of our Treaſure ſo much thereof as will ſupply all our wants, [*for Mony anſwers all things*,] Eccleſ. 10. 19. even ſo we all ought to be (as *Appollos* was , *Acts* 18. 24.) *mighty in the Scriptures*; we ſhould have a mighty ſtock of the knowledge of them, that ſo, when-ever a *buſie Devil* comes to Buffet our *Baſe Hearts*, then muſt we have a *ſmooth Stone* of the Holy Scripture ready to hurl at the very Head of our Adverſary, as *David* did at the Head of *Goliah*. Now as we are told how *David* gathered many more ſmooth Stones than he had occaſion to make uſe of in his Sling, for he gathered *five* of them, and put them into his Bag, 1 *Sam.* 17. 40. yet we find he ſlung in his Sling only one of theſe Stones at *Goliah*'s Forehead, [*he put his Hand into his Bag, and took thence only one Stone* (in the ſingular number) and *ſlung* it with ſuch a force, that it *ſunk* in the *Forehead of the Philiſtine*, and *he fell upon his Face to the Earth*] v. 49.

No

No doubt but *David* did *ſling God himſelf* along with the Stone (as before) whereby it became ſo ſpeedily effectual for the killing of that Monſter of Mankind, *&c.* even ſo we ought to be furniſhed with a large Stock of Sacred Scriptures in the *Bag* of our *Minds* and Memories, tho' poſſibly one ſingle ſmooth Stone of them may ſerve our preſent turn to drive away the Devil from us in an hour of temptation, eſpecially if we ſling this one Scripture at *Satan*'s Forehead out of the *Sling of Faith*, and God himſelf go along with that Scripture in our behalf, as he did with the *Stone* in the behalf of *David*. May we but thus (*through Grace*) *reſiſt the Devil*, he muſt then unavoidably *flee from us*, Jam. 4. 7. for what created Power can *reſiſt* the Power of the Great Creator of all Beings? [*who hath reſiſted his Will?*] Rom. 9. 19, 21. Notwithſtanding tho' one of thoſe ſmooth Stones of Sacred Scripture may thus ſerve us, and ſave us out of *Satan*'s Hands at one time, yet conſidering that *Satan* is not ſlain outright in our Victories over him, as *Goliah* was in *David*'s Victory over that Gyant: For as *Satan* did but *depart from our Redeemer*, (after he had conquered him in his Three ſucceſſive Aſſaults) *only for a Seaſon*, Luke 4. 13. ſtill deſigning to return upon him

again

again with freſh and renewed Attempts when he could eſpy out an advantage, or any opportunity: So *Satan* doth *depart* from the *Redeemed* (after their Victories at any time over him) *only for a ſeaſon*; he reſolves to return again, and hence is occaſioned the *Apoſtle*'s caution, [leſt *Satan ſhould get an advantage of us, for we are not ignorant of his Wiles and Devices,*] 2 Cor. 2. 11. Upon this account therefore we ought always to keep our Bag full of thoſe ſmooth Stones, that we may have them in *readineſs* both as *Defenſive* to our ſelves, and as *Offenſive* to *Satan* in his freſh and frequent aſſaulting us, *&c.*

3dly NB. We muſt ſet the *Word of God* againſt the Temptations of *Satan*, (as our Lord taught us by his own pattern and practice, *Matt.* 4.) and then ſay to the Tempter, [I *may not*, I *cannot*, I *dare not* do what thou tempts me to do,] and we muſt be ſure to bring ſuch ſuitable Scriptures as afford a full Anſwer to our Tempter's Temptation, (as *Chriſt* did in all his Three Conflicts,) ſaying, [this Sin, (oh *Satan*) that thou tempts me to, is forbidden in ſuch a place, and again in ſuch a place; and we muſt be ſure to have ſuch Scriptures all at hand in our Bag *ready* for our hand, as *David* had his ſmooth Stones ready: Thus we are commanded

manded [*to be ready for every good Work,*] Tit. 3. 1. and [*to be in readineſs to revenge all diſobedience,*] 2 Cor. 10. 6. yea and [*the Man of God muſt be fully furniſhed* for all *good Works*, 2 Tim. 3. 17. as our Adverſary the *Strong Man* is *fully furniſhed for all evil Works.* We ſhould be as ready to Reſiſt, as he is to Aſſault; and we ſhould have this *Sword* of the *Spirit ready* and at hand, as *Saul had his Spear* ready at his head, [*being ſtuck in the ground at his Bolſter,*] 1 Sam. 26. 7. but God forbid that ſuch a dead ſleep ſhould fall upon us to let this Sword be taken from us, as did upon him, whereby his Spear was taken from him, and he not ſenſible thereof; ſome *Son of Zerviah* will be too hard for us, as it was in his caſe, *ver.* 11, 12. 'Tis the practice of ſome perſons (who are Maſters of great Families) to ſtick up their Swords in the upper Floor, and there to hang it at their Beds Head all the night, that the Weapon might be ready for their hand in caſe of any Aſſault, by Robbers, in the dead time of the Night. Oh, that we could be ſo wiſe, in hanging this *Spiritual Sword* ſo ready Night and Day, at home and abroad, *&c.* more eſpecially the *Decalogue*, (or the Ten Commandments,) which is an Abridgment of the *Law* and the

the *Prophets*; wherein all ſorts of ſins are prohibited, even in the loweſt degree of them, *&c.* Yea, and all ſorts of Duties (both to *God* and to *Man*) are required, *&c.* There is *none like* this Sword that can cut aſunder every Knot, wherewith *Satan* would bind our Souls to any ſort of Sin, *&c.* Beſide this, let me acquaint you what other *particular Scriptures* (over and above the *Two Tables*) the Lord hath helped me to uſe as a ſharp Sword, wherewith to withſtand the violent Aſſaults of the Tempter, *&c.*

As (1*ſt*) that of *Joſeph*, [*How can I do this great wickedneſs*, and *ſin againſt God?*] Gen. 39. 9. No, he was hedged in with contrary Principles, and ſo ſaid [I cannot do it.]

And (2*ly*) that of the *Sons* of *Jacob*, [*we cannot do this* thing, *to give our Siſter unto one that is Uncircumciſed*, for that *would be a Reproach to us*; Gen. 34. 14.

And (3*ly*) that of *Nehemiah* [*ſhall ſuch a Man as I, ſin, who is there, that being as I am, would do it, I will not do it?*] Neh. 6. 11. Here is only a ſmall variation of words, but none at all of ſenſe; for his fleeing from God's Work at that time, would have been his ſinning againſt his God. Tho' I might add many more, yet for brevity ſake I ſhall mention another only,

only, which made indeed a mighty ſound in the *Ears* of my Inner Man, and as mighty an impreſſion upon the Tables of my Heart, to wit, the loud Outcry of God himſelf, ſaying, [*Oh! do not this abominable thing which I hate,*] Jer. 44. 4. And indeed as to the main courſe of my Life (*excepting theſe Bonds*, as the *Apoſtle's phraſe* is, *Acts* 26. 29. namely my manifold Infirmities) I have evermore endeavoured to obſerve this as my *ſtanding Rule*, [*where God preſſeth, there to perform*; and *where God forbiddeth*, there to *forbear*.] And to know this double Duty, *what* to *perform*, and when to *forbear*; 'tis even abſolutely neceſſary, *that the word of Chriſt* muſt dwell in us Richly, *Col.* 3. 16. as before. The knowledge of the Holy Scriptures doth *make wiſe* unto *ſalvation*, and is *profitable* in all the *concerns* of a *Chriſtian*, yea, and *compleateth* the *Man of God* for his Generation-work, as before, 2 *Tim.* 3. 15, 16, 17. and therefore every *good Soldier* of *Jeſus Chriſt* (ſuch as *young Timothy* was, 2 *Tim.* 2. 3.) muſt by all means be girded about with this *Sword* of the *Spirit*, hanging faſt at the Golden Girdle of Truth; and I muſt ſay, that one of thoſe four Scriptures, before named, or any other ſingle Sentence of God's Word (when ſpiritually improved)

proved) may do us more ſervice in our *Chriſtian* warfare, than all the witty ſayings of *Pagan Philoſophers*, or any of the ſuperſtitious Charms of the Popiſh Mountebanks. Aſſuredly *David* (*a man after God's own heart*, 1 Sam. 13. 14.) had a Divine Inſpiration, when he preſcribed that Soveraign Salve, and Sacred Antidote, and preſervative againſt ſin, ſaying, [*thy word, oh my God, I have hid in my heart, that I might not ſin againſt thee,*] Pſal. 119. 11. All which do plainly demonſtrate, what an excellent Weapon the *Word of God* is, *&c.*

Now I come to diſcourſe upon the *Seventh* and Laſt piece of this Myſtical Armour, which is likewiſe the *Second* of the *Two Offenſive Weapons*, (as the *Five former* were meerly *Defenſive*) namely, we muſt not only be Armed with the *Sword* of the Spirit, but we muſt be furniſhed alſo with the Spiritual *Darts* of *Prayer*, ver. 18. which *Duty of Praying* hath here ſubjoined to it the Duty of *Watching*; but of that afterwards. The ſame *Apoſtle* tells us, that *Satan* hath his *Darts*, and thoſe *fiery ones*, to throw at us, *ver.* 16. And here he comes in *ver.* 18. to ſhew, that we muſt have our *Darts* alſo, and that *fiery ones* too, to throw at him; for one fire ſucks out another, as

is

is oft tryed in Burnings, *&c.* ſo the fire from Heaven in Prayer, ſucks out the Fire of Hell, *&c.* otherwiſe we cannot retaliate, nor can our *Remedy* carry a proportion to our *Malady.*

This *Seventh* piece of Armour, is not only a part of our Spiritual Armour, but alſo it enableth us to make a right improvement of all the reſt; for it was at *David's Prayer* [that the *Lord taught* his *Fingers* to *fight*, and his *Hands to War*, &c. Pſal. 18. 29, 34. and 144. 1.] Prayer is our *City of Refuge*, to which we flee when all other Refuges fail us. *Prayer* hath a double excellency, as it hath a prevailing power, not only over the *Devil*, but in ſome ſort over *God himſelf.*

Firſt, Over the *Devil*, as it is an *holy Charm* againſt that crooked Serpent, *Iſa.* 26. 16. and 27. 1. When *Iſrael* was *afflicted* by Satan and his Inſtruments, they then *poured out their Prayers to God*, Heb. ſecret Speeches as Charms, and thereby the *Devil* was enchanted by their Prayers. Hence Father *Chryſoſtom* calls *Prayer* [*Flagellum Diaboli*] a *Whip* to *drive* the *Devil* away, (which is more than a meer *Charm*, to tie his Hands from harming us.) This torments him, yea and forcibly thruſts him (as it were) into another Hell, eſpecially when our *Darts* of

Prayer

Prayer (that we caſt at him) be fiery (as his are againſt us,) and have the fire of Heaven in them, (as his Darts have the fire of Hell, *&c.*) 'Tis another high Expreſſion of the ſame Father, that praying Souls ſhould be [*tanquam Leones ignem expuentes,*] which is well engliſhed, *Rev.* 11. 5. of the two famous Witneſſes 'tis ſaid there, [that *Fire proceedeth out of their Mouths, which devoureth their Adverſary,*] like the Flame that devoureth the Stubble which ſtands in its way. Thus *Samſon's Fire-brands* in his *Foxes Tails*, *burnt up* the *Standing Corn*, &c. of the *Philiſtines*, Judg. 15. 5. and if the *Fire-brands* had been fixed in the Foxes *Mouths*, (as they were in their Tails,) it would have been in ſome reſpect a more ſuitable Reſemblance of this *devouring Fire* that broke forth like a Flame out of the Mouths of thoſe two *Holy Martyrs*, which muſt be meant of their *Ardent Prayers* that they poured forth for the confuſion of their Enemies; * and this is the more probable, becauſe all Praying-Souls are commanded *to* be *fervent in Spirit* (the Greek word

* The Queen of *Scots* ſaid, ſhe feared more Mr. *Knock's* fervent Prayers, than an Army of Twenty Thouſand Soldiers. And the Duke of *Saxony* once ſaid, that he durſt not fight againſt a Praying Army.

word is [ζεόμενοι] which signifies *Seething Hot*) *ſerving the Lord*, and to *continue inſtant in Prayer*] Rom. 12. 11, 12. And thus likewiſe *David* kept his Heart warm in his Praying-work, yea, *boiling hot in this good Matter*, as the *Hebrew Margent* reads, *Pſal.* 45. 1. And could we but keep our Hearts thus in a *boiling* frame while we are at Praying-work, this would be the beſt, and the moſt bleſt expedient againſt *wandring thoughts*, &c. as before; for *Beelzebub*, that Prince of Flyes dare not fly-blow Honey while it is boiling hot, *&c.* and the Prayer-hearing God loves not to hear cold Prayers, *&c.* And the Rabbins render this Reaſon why the *Shew-Bread* in their Tabernacle-worſhip was taken off from the Table when it was cold, and the *Hot Bread* was placed before the Lord in its ſtead, becauſe the Lord loveth not *cold Diſhes*, *cold Prayers*, &c. 1 Sam. 21. 6.

But, *Secondly*, As *fervent Prayer* hath a *prevailing Power* over the *Devil*, &c. ſo it hath by Divine Condeſcention a prevailing Power even over *God* himſelf, who is the *Devil's maker*, and will be *his Rebuker* for us, *&c.* for ſo gracious is our *Prayer-hearing God*, that he is pleaſed to *command* us, [*that we ſhall command him, concerning the Work of his Hands*]

Iſai. 45. 11. and that [*the Seed* of *Jacob* (*who had power over God*, and *prevailed* by his *wreſtling* with him, *Gen.* 32. 26. and *Hoſ.* 12. 4.) *ſhall never ſeek the Lord in vain*, Iſa. 45. 19. I have ſhewed at large in my *Chriſtian Walk* upon Prayer, how it hath a kind of Omnipotency in commanding all the *Four Elements*, &c. yea, and over *God himſelf* by *Moſes*'s *Prayer* for his People; at which the Lord ſaith to *Moſes*, [*let me alone, that I may conſume them*, &c.] Exod. 32. 10. where God (as it were) begs his own freedom, as if *Moſes*'s *Devotion* had proved too ſtrong for *God's Indignation*; as if *Moſes's Prayer* had bound up the Hands of Omnipotency it ſelf; and therefore the Omnipotent God doth (as it were) intreat *Moſes* to *let him alone to his own liberty*, &c. Now if ſo, the Argument [*a majori ad minus*] from the *greater* to the leſſer, it undeniably concludeth, that if Fervent Prayer can prevail with God himſelf, how much more may it prevail againſt *Satan*, who is but one of *God's Creatures*, and at the command of *his* Creator! However, this is a moſt manifeſt Truth, that when we are in any ſore Conflict with *Satan*, inſomuch that this *Strong Man* is like to prove too ſtrong for us, and in all probability will ſoon conquer us,

us, then *fervent Prayer* must be our winged *Messenger* to send and call for help from Heaven; and this is our *strong Consolation*, that our Messenger will as easily prevail over our Blessed *Jesus* to come speedily for succouring us against *Satan*, as those Messengers which the *Gibeonites* did send for that Great General *Joshua*, saying, [*Slack not thy Hand from thy Servants*, (*who are now entred into* Covenant with thee) but *come to us quickly* and *save us*, for *all the Kings* of the *Amorites*, that *dwell* in the *Mountains*, are *gathered together against us*,] Josh. 10. 6, *&c.* Upon this earnest and affectionate Message and Outcry, General *Joshuah* immediately comes from *Gilgal*, (the place of *rolling away Reproach*, as the word signifies,) and falls upon the cursed *Kings* and *Canaanites* unexpectedly, and surprizes them all suddenly: Yea, and the Lord himself likewise threw down great Hail-stones out of Heaven upon them, and thereby all those formidable Adversaries were quite destroyed; accordingly this is very often our own case. Alas! *how weak are our Hearts*, Ezek. 16. 30. when this *Strong Man* armed maketh his furious Assaults upon us. *David* did acknowledge himself as unable to resist his strong Adversaries, (when he cried [*have mercy*

upon me, O Lord, for *I am weak*, &c. Pſal. 6. 2, 3, 4.) as the *Gibeonites* did t withſtand the Forces of the Kings of th Mountains, &c. much more may we b ſenſible of our own inſufficiency to ſtan before the violent ſhoks of this *Strong Ma Satan*; no *meer mortal man* is *ſufficient* *himſelf* for that withſtanding work, (n not the *Innocenteſt Man Adam*, nor th *Strongeſt Man Samſon*, no nor the *Wiſe Man Solomon* (as elſewhere) [*but tru* all *our ſufficiency is of God*, 2 Cor. 3. 5 and therefore muſt we ſend our *winge Meſſengers* of *fervent Prayers* to him, an make out our *ſtrong Cries* unto *Chriſt Je ſus*, as the *Gibeonites* did unto that grea General *Joſhuah*, ſaying, [oh our dea *Lord Jeſus*, *ſlack not thy Hand from th* Servants, (who are, through thy Grace brought into the bonds of the Covenan of Grace with thy bleſſed ſelf;) oh make no delay, let our *extremity* be thy *oppor tunity*; not only the *Philiſtines* are fal upon us, as upon *Samſon*, but even the *Kings* of the *Mountains*, even *Spiritual Wickedneſſes* in *high Places*, called *Prin cipalities* and *Powers* do make their fur ous Aſſaults upon us. We have put our ſelves (oh Lord) under thy bleſſed Pro tection. Therefore haſten to ſuccour us, and *make no long tarrying*, *oh our good*

God,

God, Psal. 40. 17.] then may we hope to hear the sound of God's *goings* upon the *Tops* of the *Mulberry-Trees*, 2 Sam. 5. 24. and we may have cause to sing with the Spouse, saying, ['tis the *Voice of our Beloved, behold he cometh, leaping over Mountains, and skipping over Hills,*] Cant. 2. 8. He is coming, he is coming to bring the *supplies* of the *Spirit* of *Christ* to relieve our Souls, *Phil.* 1. 19. and he will *pour down great Hail* Stones out of Heaven upon the Heads of our Spiritual Enemies, and discomfit them, tho' *Satan* and a whole Kingdom of Devils be engaged against us.

This *7th* piece of Armour is called *Armatura Armaturæ*, the Armour of Armour, named last, because it buckles all the rest on, and helps to a right improvement of all, both for Defence and Offence, *&c.* Thus *David* had such *Outcries* as these, saying, [*This poor Man cried*, and the *Lord heard him*, and *saved him*, &c.] Psal 34. 6. And thus *Paul* had such Outcries also, saying, [*Oh wretched Man that I am, who shall deliver me?* and then *thanketh he his Lord Christ for delivering him*, &c.] Rom. 7. 24, 25. And thus the *Betrothed Damsel cried out*, when she was assaulted by one too strong for her; and tho' she found no Deliverer, yet is she as-

ſured that *ſhe ſhall not die, becauſe ſhe cried out*, Deut. 22. 27. But the *Virgin, Daughter of Sion*, fared better, for ſhe had her Saviour to *come* and *ſuccour her* at her *Outcries* after Him, who put a *Bridle upon that unruly Beaſt* her *Adverſary*, and ſo comforted her heart as to make her able even to *laugh him to ſcorn*, &c. Iſa. 37. 22, 28, 29. In ſhort, all theſe *premiſes* do abundantly demonſtrate the excellency of this *laſt part* of the *Chriſtian* Armour, namely, *Darts* of *Prayer*, which drives the Devil out of the Field (in our *warring this good Warfare*) and conſtrains him to flee from us as one conquered by us. *NB. When our own Prayers prevail not, Note well*, the Prayer of *Chriſt* ſaved *Peter* from Satan's Snare, *Luke* 22. 31, 32. more eſpecially if we join *Faſting* to *Praying*; tho' *Homer* tells us, how *Neſtor* in the *Wars* of *Troy* muſt take his Breakfaſt in the Morning to animate himſelf the more for his fighting work: Yet our Lord doth better tell us, that there be ſome Devils of ſuch a malignant Nature, that they cannot be caſt out but by *Faſting* and *Prayer*, Matt. 17. 21. How well therefore doth the *Apoſtle* command us to be [*praying always with all Prayer* and *Supplication in the Spirit*, Eph. 6. 18. that is, all ſorts of Prayer

ye

yea the beſt ſort of Prayer, both that which is edged and animated with Faſting, and more eſpecially that of [*praying in the Holy Ghoſt*,] Jude ver. 20. for *fervent Prayer* is a clear Stream that flows ſolely from the pure Spring of the *Spirit* of Grace, *&c.* and that this *Praying-work* may be the more effectually performed, the *Apoſtle* ſubjoins the Duty of [*watching* thereunto *with all perſeverance*, &c.] ver. 18. that we may not be ſurprized at unawares, becauſe the *Devil watcheth us*, and *walketh his Round Night and Day* unceſſantly to take us napping, 1 *Pet.* 5. 8. *ſeeking whom he may devour*, as before; therefore is *watching* ſo neceſſary, that it is ſo often recorded in Scripture as an univerſal Duty, (as above) and moſt needful in *praying* work: Hereupon our Lord joins them both together, [*Watch and Pray leſt ye enter into Temptation*,] Matth. 26. 41. as the *Apoſtle* doth here; for if we be not upon our Guard continually, and even *Watch* while we do *Pray*, both over *Satan*'s Temptations *without*, and over *our own Corruptions within*, *Satan* will be interrupting us, as the *Pythoneſs* (his Inſtrument) did interrupt *Paul in his Praying-work*, Acts 16. 16. and as the Fowls of the Air (which is the *Devil's Territories*, Epheſ. 1. 2, 3.) did interrupt

Father *Abraham* in his *Sacrificing-work*, Gen. 15. 11. Yea, and as the *Adverſaries* (*Sanballat*, &c.) did moleſt good *Nehemiah* in his Building-work, *Neh.* 4. 1. 'Tis a certain obſervation, that amongſt all Actions *Satan* will be buſieſt in the beſt of Actions, and moſtly moſt buſie in the beſt part of that beſt Action, as towards the cloſure of Prayer, when the Heart ſhould be cloſing it ſelf up with the ſweeteſt comforts, *&c.* therefore are we bid to *Watch* and *Pray*, and to *Pray* and *Watch*, that *Satan* may not draw us out of our Trenches, as *Joſhuah* did the *Men* of *Ai*, Joſh. 8. 6. therefore our *Lord* exhorteth us to *abide in the Vine*, Joh. 15. 4, 7. and his *beloved Diſciple* ſaith, [*Y little Children abide in him,*] 1 Joh. 2. 28. that is, *keep Home*, keep cloſe, under the *ſhadow* of your *Father's Wing*, Pſal. 91. 1. Our Lord ſaith [*O Jeruſalem, Jeruſalem*, how *oft would I have gathered my Children* together, even as a *Hen gathers* her Chickens under her Wings, *&c.*] *Matth.* 23. 37. which intimateth, that thoſe are fond Chickens that dare to ſtraggle at diſtance from under the *Wing* of their *Dam*, and expoſe themſelves to the ravenous Claws of the Kite. Naturaliſts relate of the Bird *Onocratulus*, which is ſo much inur'd with the Hawk's grapling with her, that ſhe always ſleepeth

with

with her Beak or Bill advanced for her own defence, *&c.* Now when the *Law of Nature* or *Inſtinct* can teach thoſe *irrational* Creatures ſuch prudence to ſave themſelves from the Birds of Prey, *&c.* how much more ought the *light of Grace* to teach us [who are *Rational*] how to ſtand always upon our guard againſt that Prince, *Fowl of the Air*, &c. We read that chaſt *Joſeph* did ſo, *Gen.* 39. 7, *&c.* where it is ſaid [*after theſe things*, &c.] that is, after he had lived ſafe from Temptations about *ten* or *eleven Years* (riſing all along from a lower to an higher ſtation) in *Potiphar*'s Houſe, yet then was he *aſſaulted* by *Satan* in his *wanton* and *wicked Miſtreſs*, &c. but ſtill the *good Man kept conſtant upon his watch*, and ſo *drove away the Devil*, &c. ver. 9. But ſo did not *Dinah*, who out of curioſity, did wander from her Father's Houſe to *view the Daughters of the Land*, and ſo was ſurprized by *Shechem* too ſtrong for her, *&c.* *Gen.* 34. 1, 2. nor was *David* likely *upon his watch*, when he *looked on*, and *luſted* after *Bathſhebah*, &c. 2 Sam. 11. 2, &c. Tho' this holy *David* had been (all along before this) upon his watch, and *kept himſelf from this his iniquity*, Pſal. 18. 23. both while he was *many years* perſecuted by *Saul*, and while he Reigned much

longer

longer as King, and employed in conti nual wars; all this long time he lived i *God's fear*, and *had Reſpect* to *all God' Precepts*, Pſal. 119. 6. but at laſt arrivin to *Eaſe* and *Idleneſs*, (one of *SODOM* ſins, *Ezek.* 16.49.) the *Strong Man* found him then neglecting his watch, and puſhe him down, giving him ſuch a foul Fal as *broke* his Bones, which cauſed his wri ting his famous Penitential Pſalms, *&c.* and thus likewiſe this watchful Adverſa ry, *Satan*, found *Peter neglecting* his *watch*, got him *into his Sieve*, and ſhaked him to and fro to make *Chaff* of him, *Luke* 22. 31, 32. and this he would have effected, had not the *Prayer of Chriſt* for him moſt graciouſly prevented it, *&c.* alas, a buſie *Devil* and a *baſe Heart* did deceive him, when he ſaid, [tho' all *forſake thee*, *Lord*, yet *will not I*,] Mark 14. 20. Matt. 26. 33. (as had been *Orpah*'s caſe before, *Ruth* 1. 10.) therefore did *Peter watch* that weakeſt part of his Heart, where *Satan* had broke in upon him, with utmoſt care ever after; and hence is it, that this *penitent Peter* (who, after his ſin, *went out* and *wept bitterly*, Luke 22. 63.) gives us ſo many *watch words* in his *Epiſtles*, as (1.) *Be ye alway ready*, &c. 1 Pet. 3. 16. And (2.) Be *ſober*, and *watch unto Prayer*, Chap. 4. 7. Yea, and (3) Be *vigi-*

vigilant, *becauſe your Adverſary the Devil* is hunting for you, *&c. Chap.* 5. 8. whom reſiſt ſtedfaſt in the Faith, *&c. ver.* 9. and our Lord ſaith, [*I ſay unto all watch*, Mark 13. 35, 36. 37. 'Tis very remarkable how the Apoſtle *Peter* doth ſymbolize, keeps harmony and concurreth with his *beloved Brother Paul*, as he calleth him, 2 *Pet.* 3. 14, 15, 17, 18.) about compleating this *Chriſtian Warfare*, and yet with a little addition; for whereas *Paul*'s phraſe is [*give not place to the Devil*,] Epheſ. 4. 27. no *not for an hour*, Gal. 2. 5. but *ſtand* and *withſtand*, Epheſ. 6. 11, 13, 14. as the Apoſtle *James* ſaith downright, [*Reſiſt him, and he will flee from you*,] James 4. 7. ſo this Apoſtle *Peter* ſteps higher, ſaying, [*Reſiſt this roaring and devouring Lion*, [στερεοὶ ἐν πίστει] *ſtedfaſt in the Faith*,] 1 Pet. 5. 8, 9. that is, we muſt do our utmoſt under the *ſhield of Faith*, not only to *defend our ſelves*, but alſo to *offend* our *Adverſary*, which we can never do, but firſt by *right means*, and 2*ly* In a *right manner*. 1*ſt* Of the 1*ſt*. *Firſt*, The *right means* are not (1*ſt*) *Negatively*, nor (1.) any *wit* or *policy* of our own to argue *Satan* away from us by parlying with him, for this ſubtle Serpent doth far exceed and excel us in Craft and Sophiſtry; as it plainly appeared in

our

our Great Grandmother *Eve* daring to *parly* with him, *Gen.* 3. 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6. Oh, how cunning was this Tempter to begin his *parlying* with *her* who was the *weaker Veſſel*, which was according to that old ſaying, [*where the Hedge is the loweſt*, there the miſchievous Beaſt will leap over.] Alas, we do but ſhoot with *Satan* in his own Bow, (wherein he can eaſily beguile us) when we attempt to puſh back our Tempter only by parlying with him. If he proved too *hard* for *Eve* therein in her ſtate of *Innocency*, and to ſo *green a Tree*; how much more hard for us poor *dry Trees*, in the faln eſtate! 'Tis an aſſured great Truth, that *Satan* is better *believed away*, and *prayed away*, than *parlied* or *argued away*: Nor (2.) is it any majeſty or authority either in our awful *Looks*, or in our hectoring Words that will affright him away from us; the *Devil* is not a Dog to be ſcared away ſo, either with an angry Aſpect, or with *threatning Language*, ſaying, [*Avaunt Satan, and Devil do thy worſt, I defie thee and all thy works.*] But 2*ly Poſitively*, the *right means* we muſt reſiſt him with, is by our *putting on the Lord Jeſus Chriſt*, Rom. 13. 14. and the *whole Armour of God*, Epheſ. 6. 11, 13. wherein we muſt *ſtand our ground*, and *withſtand his Wiles*, &c.

Secondly,

Secondly, as to the *right manner*, we muſt not be like *ſecure Laiſh*, Judg. 18.27. nor like *careleſs Babylon*, Rev. 18. 7, 8. but be always upon our *watch* and *guard*, for he comes cunningly like a *ſly Serpent*, with Hony in his Mouth, &c. but when he leaves us, he then leaves behind him the Sting in his Tail, and departs like a bloody Lion, tearing in pieces thoſe he overcomes. Nor can we eſcape by *fleeing* from him, were we like *Aſahel*, as ſwift as a Roe, &c. 2 *Sam.* 2. 18. for this *great old Red Dragon*, Rev. 12. 3. hath *great Wings* wherewith he can eaſily overtake us, and then is our greateſt danger upon a double *Account* and *Reaſon*.

For (1*ſt*) NB. *Note well*, Among all this *Spiritual Armour* before-named, there is no part or piece thereof preſcribed for protecting the *Back*, which when *Satan* finds unarmed in his purſuit after us, he moſt eaſily pierceth us with his *fiery Darts* through our bare Backs, even to our very Hearts, *&c.*

And the (2*d*) *Reaſon* is, we then do not only flee from the *Devil*, but from *God* too, who hath bid us *ſtand* and *withſtand*, and hath promiſed to protect us in doing thoſe Duties: Therefore all *Apoſtates* and *Backſliders*, who run away from under God's protection, [*his Soul can have no pleaſure*

pleasure in them,] Heb. 10. 38. the *Lord will deliver up such into Satan's hands*, 1 Tim. 1. 20. and *wo to us* when *God departs from us*, Hos. 9. 12. then *all evil comes upon us*, &c. It followeth then, that the Duty of *Resisting* must likewise be done, as an additional Duty unto *Watching* and *Praying*; and we must spend our whole lives in the *work* of watching, *praying* and *resisting* to our dying day, *&c.* Upon those few following *Considerations*, over and above the Arguments before-mentioned.

As *(1st) Consider* well, that the Devil is like the *Crocodile*, of whom *Pliny* relateth, that if men pursue him, he will flee from them, but if men flee from him, he will then pursue after them, *&c.*

2*ly Consider* there is indeed a *playing upon the hole of the Asp*, and a *putting the hand upon the Cockatrice Den*, which *Christ* hath promised he will secure *little Children* from the *danger thereof*, Isa. 11. 8. when he comes to *create the new Heavens* and the *new earth*, *wherein shall dwell all righteousness*, 2 Pet. 3. 13. But we may not do so now; for if we dally with the Devil, in leading our selves into Places and Companies of Temptation, (whereas we pray that the Lord may not *lead us into Temptation*, in the *Lord's Prayer*) this is foolish presumption, and a plain tempting of the Tempter. *(3ly)*

(3ly) *Consider* what is required of us in this *Resisting Duty*, 'tis only a *strong negative*, resolving in *Christ's strength* to answer the Tempter with an holy and peremptory *No*, *No*, I *may not*, I cannot, I dare not do it; to give *Satan* a flat denial is no difficult Duty, and 'tis not resisting unto blood. *Heb.* 12. 4.

(4ly) *Consider*, if we *resist* not, but *yield*, (contrary to that Apostolical command) [*yield not your Members* as *weapons* of *wickedness* unto sin (as the Greek word [ὅπλα] signifies,) *Rom.* 6. 13, 14, 19. then are we *taken Captives* by *Satan*, and led about by him, as his *Slaves*, *at his will*, 2 Tim. 2. 26. and not *taken* to be *preserved alive* (as before) but to be *destroyed*, *&c.* 2 *Pet.* 2. 12. Oh woful condition, *&c.*

(5ly) *Consider*, that he who now *tempts* us to sin, will *accuse* us afterward for that sin, (as elsewhere;) yea, and those very *Snares of Sin* (wherewith *Satan* at present doth entangle us,) will at the last become *Chains of Darkness* in Hell, *&c.*

(6ly) *Consider*, this *striving against sin*, Heb. 12. 4. must be constant, and last so long as life doth last; we should resist wholly with this *whole Armour of God*, because when we have overcome the *prophane Devil*, a *worldly Devil* may prevail against

againſt us: Or if we have been mad able to maſter a *Swearing Devil*, then *Lying Devil* may prove too hard for us and if we can conquer all thoſe and man more *Devils*, &c. After the ſubduing o all theſe, then may the *Devil* of *Pri* riſe up and prevail over us; for that ol ſaying of *Bernard*'s, [*Tot Dæmonia, qu Crimina*, ſo *many ſins* as do reign over us ſo many *Devils* do rule in us; ſeeing ever ſuch *ſin* hath a *Devil* in it: Now this ſi of *Pride*, as it is the *firſt* that is *learn* ſo it is the *laſt* that is *left*; for there i ſomething of *Pride* even in the beſ *Hearts*; even good *Hezekiah*'s was lifte up in pride, 2 *Chron.* 32. 25, 31.

(7*ly*) *Conſider* for our *Comfort*, that ou conſtant *conflict* againſt *Sin* and *Satan* is better evidence of true ſanctifying and ſa ving grace, than any perfection of Holi neſs that can be found in the moſt ſancti fied ſouls. *Paul* himſelf, who, tho' he had been rap'd up into the *Third Heavens* and into *Paradice* it ſelf, 2 *Cor.* 12. 2, 4 yet he after this complaineth of a *Thorn* in the *Fleſh*, a *Meſſenger of Satan to buf fet him*, &c. ver. 7, 8, 9. and he ſaith o himſelf, [*not as tho' I had already attain ed*, or were *already perfect*, *but I preſs after it*, &c. Phil. 3. 11, 12, 13, 14. and crys, [*Oh wretched man*, &c. Rom. 7. 24.

8*ly*

8*ly* and *laſtly*, Let us *conſider*, and *better conſider* for our *comfort*, *if we can but know* that *Chriſt is in us*, 2 *Cor.* 13. 5. then *Chriſt* in us is *ſtronger* for us, than this *Strong Man Satan* can be againſt us, Luke 11. 21, 22. *If our Lord be for us, 'tis no matter who or what is againſt us*, Rom. 8. 31. *Stronger is he in us, than he that is in the World*, 1 John 4. 4. As our Lord hath conquered *Satan* (as before) in his own Perſon, ſo he hath promis'd to do the ſame in all his ſincere Members; he *will not loſe* ſo *much* as *one of them*, John 6. 39. and 17. 12. Oh pray, pray, pray, that *Chriſt* may ſtrengthen us, *Phil.* 4. 13. that we may ſhake this Viper (the Old Serpent) from off our Hearts, as *Paul* did the *Viper* from off his *Hands into the fire* of Hell, *Acts* 28. *ver.* 4, 5, 6, *&c.*

CHAP. IV.

Shewing the way to Compleat a Conqueſt in God's Armour.

Advice to Young and Old, &c.

THere be Two Grand Duties (that concern all Mankind, Male and Female, Rich and Poor, Young and Old, *&c.*) which are coupled together in that one Verſe, 1 *Tim.* 6. 19. to wit,

(1*ſt*) A *laying up in ſtore for our ſelves a good foundation* againſt the time to come. And

(2*dly*) A *laying hold on Eternal Life.*

Firſt, of the 1ſt [*Lay a good Foundation*, &c.] This is always look'd upon by Wiſe Men as a Work of great weight, we ought all to be *Builders* of the *Tower* of *Godlineſs*, Luke 14. 28. 'Tis compared to a Tower upon manifold accounts. As, (1.) 'Tis an *high* Building. (2.) *Stately.* (3.) *Difficult.* (4.) Expoſed to Storms which plain Ground is not obvious unto. (5.) *Coſtly*, far beyond Hutts or Cottages, *&c.* (6.) Godlineſs hath all the parts of an *Ædifice*, as *Foundation*, *Corners*, and the

the Roof or Top, *&c.* Now this Good Foundation, is not either *Good Meanings*, or *General Mercy*, or an *External Profeſſion*; theſe are all *Sandy*, Matth. 7.24,26. but 'tis the *Rock Chriſt*, 1 Cor. 3. 11. Acts 4. 12. Col. 1. 15, 17. 1 Pet. 1. 20. Rev. 13. 8, *&c.*

Now if we fail in the Foundation, which is the firſt of thoſe two *great Duties*, we can never obtain any ſolid ground of Hope for the *Second*, of *laying hold on Eternal Life*, which is the Top of that Myſtical *Tower*, of which it may be truly ſaid, even without any Hyperbole, what is ſaid of the *Tower* of *Babel*, that the *Top of it reacheth up into Heaven*, Gen. 11. 4. An Antient Popiſh Limner or Painter drew *Solomon*'s Picture, in this Poſture, of his being one half in Heaven, and the other half in Hell, *&c.* Thus the Man that ſets one of his Feet upon a Rock, but his other Foot upon a Quagmire, (contiguous to the Rock) whereby he Sinketh down with his whole Body into the Dirt, *&c.* Thus likewiſe will it befal us, if we make not *Chriſt* our *All*, *and in All*, Col. 3. 11. but lean partly upon God, and partly upon the World; if we halt betwixt the *Fleſh* and the *Spirit*, alas we then ſeem to hang (as it were) equally poiz'd betwixt our fear of

Hell, and our hope of Heaven, with
lomon's Picture, *&c.*

NB. Note well, All true *Chriſti*
(whether Young or Old) ſhould m
ſerious Reflections upon the remainder
the Body of Sin, or the unrenewed p
in them, even in the *ſincereſt Conver*
and in the *ſoundeſt Believers*, which w
make us like the *Kine* that carried
Ark of God to *Bethſhemeſh*, (which ſig
fies the *Houſe* of the *Sun*,) *they w*
all along lowing, as they went, &c. 1 Sa
6. 12. Thus the *Apoſtle* phraſeth it, [
this Earthly Tabernacle we *groan earn*
ly, &c.] 2 Cor. 5. 2. and he cries o
[*Oh wretched man*, &c.] Rom. 7.
Thus if we be truly and throughly ſe
ble of the *indwellings* of *ſin* in us,
we ſtill keep this *ſtraight* way to
Houſe of the *Son of Righteouſneſs*,
neither turn to the *Right Hand* or L
(as is ſaid of the *Kine* above) yet
ſmarting experience of ſo much reli
of *original* pollution in us, will cauſe
to go along groaning to our very Gra
This likewiſe was one great point of G
ly *Agur*'s prayer, [remove, Lord, far fr
me both *vanity* and *villany before I die*,
Prov. 30. 7, 8.] he durſt not truſt his o
heart either with *Poverty* or *Riches*, w
knowing what *Solomon* had ſaid bef
[

He that truſteth in his own heart, is a fool,] Prov. 28. 26. And it muſt be bewailingly acknowledged, that ſin (like its father the Devil, having the whole World for its Walk, *&c.*) is the moſt Heart-grieving, and the worſt Companion that we can have or meet with in our way to Heaven; hereupon we are exhorted [*to take heed* of an *evil Heart*, of an *evil Heart* of unbelief, *&c.*] Heb. 3. 12. [*becauſe* of the *deceitfulneſs* of Sin,] *ver.* 13. All which imports, that *ſin* of it ſelf is ſo deceitful as eaſily to deceive us; and our own Hearts are *deceitful above all things*, Jer. 17. 9. yet ſo as to be eaſily deceived by deceitful ſin, *&c.* Inſomuch as we can ſee ſmall ground for *ſecurity*, (tho' ſome for ſafety as *kept by Chriſt*, Jude ver. 1.) while we are on this ſide Heaven, *&c.* 'Tis our caution and fear of falling that in Chriſt contributes much to our ſtanding. The grace of *fear* is a great preſerver of the Soul, not only *all the day long*, Prov. 23. 17. but even all our *life long* alſo in God's fear, and in God's favour too, *&c.* He that keepeth alive the *fear of God in him*, cannot well want the *favour of God on him*; tho' he may ſometimes loſe this *latter*, in reſpect of *Viſion*, (as in caſes of *Deſertion*, &c. yet he never wants it in reſpect of *Union*. Thus *David* loſt not

his *salvation* by his sin, he had only lo
the *joy of his salvation*; which he beseech
the Lord to *restore* to him, *Psal.* 51. 1
The grand concern of every Christian i
how to live well, and how to *die well*:
how to *live* in *God's fear*, and how t
die in God's *favour*, &c. In order her
unto, our Lord hath most graciousl
granted us many Divine Rules, both i
the *Old* and in the *New Testamen*
Namely,

(1st) That of the *Prophet*, [*What doth the Lord* require of *thee, O Man, but to do justly*, to love mercy, and to *walk humbly with thy God*,] Mic. 6. 8. This com prehends the sum and substance of th *Ten Commandments*, and is a compend um of the *Law* and the *Prophets*, &c. T name no more but a few;

(2dly) That of the Apostle, [*Keep th Conscience void of offence*, both *toward God*, and *towards Man always*, &c.] A& 24, 16. unto which let me add the sam Apostles *three Adverbs*, &c. [*The Grac of God teacheth us to live Soberly, Right teously and Holily in this present World* Tit. 2. 12.

Hæc tria perpetuo meditare Adverbia Pau
Hæc tria sunt vitæ regula sancta tuæ.

I shall

I ſhall add no more than this one of our Lord, (who is Lord both of the Prophets, and of the Apoſtles afore-named,) namely, his *general* precept and preſcription to every *particular* and individual Believer, [*Watch* and *Pray*, that *ye enter not into Temptation*,] Matth. 26. 41. wherein the practick part of all true Chriſtians is clearly preſcribed, demonſtrating, *Firſt*, The *Antidote* or *Preſervative*. And *Secondly*, The *Diſeaſe* we are in danger to fall into by our neglect of the Duty. This Text is a part of *Chriſt*'s Swan-like Song a little before his Death; they are the *living words* of this greateſt of dying Prophets, a Divine Lecture or Leſſon taught by a *Dying Chriſt* for all *living Chriſtians* to learn. For,

(1*ſt*) The *danger* is *univerſal* [εἰσέλθητε] *leſt ye enter*, &c. this implies a *poſſibility*, yea and more than a *probability*, not only of *entring into Temptation*, but alſo to be oft within the verges and circumferences of it; yea, and ſometimes to fall by the power of it, and too often; for if we make an impartial inquiry into the *Book* of our own *experiences*, we ſhall there find, that we are more, and oftner in Temptation than out of it; whereas it ſhould be *Chriſt's day*, and *Satan's hour*, (according to thoſe two *Scripture Phraſes*,

ſes, Luke 22. 53. 1 Cor. 1. 8. Rev. 1. 10. Alas, how oft is it quite contrary, that *Satan* hath a whole Day, when *Chriſt* hath but an Hour with us; yea, and not that little time without *diſtraction*, 1 Cor. 7. 35. How oft may our Lord ſay to us, as he ſaid to his ſleepy Diſciples here, [*What, could ye not watch with me one hour!*] Matth. 26. 40. for he had bidden them [*watch with me,*] ver. 38. *NB. Note well*, Thoſe Three *Peter*, *James* and *John* had ſeen their Maſter's Glory in his *Transfiguration*, Matth. 17. 1, 2. and now they muſt be *Eye-witneſſes* of his behaviour in his *Agony* alſo; ſo our Lord bids them [*watch with him:*] he bids them not [*pray for him,*] for he needed not their Prayers, *&c.* He was to *tread the Wine-preſs* alone *Iſai.* 63. 3. Obſerve what *miſerable Comforters* were thoſe ſleepy and ſlippery Diſciples unto their ſweet Saviour, who was deeply concerned for them in the midſt of his Agony, as he was after upon his Croſs, to grant the Prayer of the Penitent Thief, and to lend a look of Love on *Peter*, the Backſlider, *Luke* 22. 11. And both theſe he did, while himſelf was paying the Redemption of the World for his Fellow-ſufferer, *Luke* 23. 42, 43. as he had done before for poor *Peter*, while he was anſwering his Ad-

Adverſaries for his own Life. Thus we find thoſe *Three Diſciples* were not only in *danger* of *entring into Temptation*, but they were alſo got into it, and faln by it, which is the Diſtemper and Diſeaſe it ſelf; for their *Saviour* found that *Satan* had lull'd them all faſt aſleep, whereas they ſhould have *watched with him*, and *prayed* for themſelves, (tho' not for him that needed no Mediators (ſeeing they were ſo near to become *ſcattered Sheep* at the ſmiting of their Shepherd. Our Lord had ſome *lucid intervals*, and a little breathing time in the midſt of his *Agony*, wherein he comes to them once and again, and finds he may tread the Wine-preſs alone for any comfort from them. And,

(1ſt) He ſharply rebukes them for their former vain conceit of themſelves, promiſing to do great things, *&c. Matth.* 26. 33,35. but they were ſo far from *dying with him*, that they could not ſo much as *watch with him*, &c. And,

(2dly) He gravely exhorts them to this double Duty of *Watching* and *Praying*.

Then *(3dly)* He candidly and kindly comforts them againſt their *outward weakneſs* by his owning, acknowledging and accepting of their *inward willingneſs*; the *Spirit is willing, tho' Fleſh be weak*. Oh, who would not love this ſweet Saviour, that

that puts ſuch a candid Conſtruction upon his Saints Infirmities ; alas, how oft may our Lord come and catch us napping, and oft offering up no better than yawning Devotion. Alas, how oft a *bare waſt* of the *Footmen* (in leſſer Temptations) have thrown us down, as was *Jeremy*'s caſe, *Jer.* 12.5. How then ſhall we be able to *contend with* the *Horſemen* of ſtronger Temptations! While we live in this lower Region, we are expoſed to ſo many violent Temptations from the Tempter, that Prince of the Power of the Air, *Epheſ.* 2. 2, 3. therefore are we called to *come up higher*, and to be *Upper-region* perſons, and to lead loftier lives than the men of the World can do in an unconverted condition : [the *way of life is above to the wiſe*, that he *may depart from* Hell beneath] *Prov.* 15. 24. *Were but our converſation* more in *Heaven*, Phil. 3. 20. while our *commemoration* is here on Earth, we ſhould then be raiſed up above the reach of Storms, &c. and [*if we be riſen with Chriſt, we muſt* ſet our *affections upon things above*, &c. Col. 3. 1, 2, 3. for *yè are dead* (namely to *Sin*, and to the World,) and *your life is hid with Chriſt in God.* Now to attain unto this happy eſtate of living above the reach of the Poiſon of the Old Serpent, (whereof we are in *perils often, and in*

Jeopardy

Jeopardy every hour, as the Apoſtle phraſeth it,) our Lord hath preſcribed in the (2d) place a *double Antidote* or *Remedy* to this before-named *Poiſon* or *Malady*, namely, to lead a life made up of conſtant and continual *Watching* and *Praying*; and this is the way (having *put on the whole Armour of God*, as is aforeſaid,) to ſecure our Souls from both entring into, coming in, and falling by every Temptation; and not only ſo, but alſo to be *Conquerors*, yea *more than ſo*, Rom. 8. 37. even to be *Triumphers in Chriſt*, 2 Cor. 2. 14. *NB. Note well*, The ſeventh and laſt part of our *Spiritual Armour* (as deſcribed in *Epheſ. 6. 18.*) hath a concurring concordancy with *Chriſt*'s Command, [*Watch* and *Pray*,] Matth. 26. 41. and likewiſe imports the frequency, conſtancy and continuance of thoſe two *neceſſary*, but too much *neglected Duties*, in an additional phraſe of [*Praying always*, and *Watching thereunto with all* perſeverance, *&c.*] that is, as we muſt *pray always*, ſo we muſt *watch always*, even all our lives long. The whole life of a Chriſtian conſiſts wholly of Watching and Prayer, *&c.*

Beſide this *firſt difference* betwixt thoſe two Texts, which reſpecteth *Time*, thoſe two Duties muſt be done *always*, even all our Days. There is a *Second Difference* that

that reſpecteth *Order*, for our Lord placeth *Watching* before *Praying*, Matt. 26. 41. but his *Apoſtle* placeth *Praying* before *Watching*, Epheſ. 6. 18. Now all the Inference to be deduced from this difference is this only, that we muſt *Watch* and *Pray* as our Lord biddeth us; and we muſt *Pray* and *Watch* as his Apoſtle requireth us, and that all the days of our lives. The ſum of the whole is this in ſhort:

(*1ſt*) *Man's Malady* and Danger; all men, even the beſt of men are obnoxious, and lay evermore expoſed to the evil of manifold Temptations, even from a threefold original, to wit from the *Fleſh*, from the World, and from the Devil: Thus even thoſe Three Diſciples who had beheld *Chriſt*'s Glory in his Transfiguration, (as above) and therefore they might the more have been able to cleave cloſer to him now; yet even thoſe of the higheſt Rank were not only in the *Danger*, but in the very *Diſeaſe* it ſelf; yea, and which is much more, we are told, that [*our Lord was tempted* like unto us in all things, ſin only excepted, *Heb.* 4. 15. And if this was done to ſuch a *Green Tree*, what may ſuch *Dry Trees* as we are expect! *Luke* 23. 31. no place, nor time for ſecurity to the beſt.

(*2dly*)

(2dly) The *Remedy* and Deliverance is by a *double Duty*, (underſtood under *Chriſt* our *Deliverer*, as above at large;) The *firſt* is *Watch*, and the *ſecond* is *Pray*, as in *Matth.* 26. 41. and in *Luke* 21. 36. our Lord makes an addition, namely *Watch* and *Pray always*; to which the Apoſtle's phraſe, *Epheſ.* 6. 18. *Col.* 4. 2. and 1 *Theſ.* 5. 17. do well agree.

Firſt, of the *firſt* of thoſe *Duties*, 'Tis the duty of all Chriſt's Diſciples to watch. *Reaſons.*

(1ſt) 'Tis a neceſſary Duty upon a double Account, (1.) *Neceſſitate Medii*, as neceſſary means for our ſafety. And, (2.) *Neceſſitate Præcepti*, as it is commanded by the Lord.

(1ſt) 'Tis *neceſſary* as a *means* whereby we are preſerved from Danger, for our *life* is a warfare, *Job* 7. 1. *Margent*, and we can never accompliſh this warfare, *Iſai.* 40. 1. without *watching*, every *Chriſtian* is a *Soldier*, 2 Tim. 2. 3. who is liſted under *Chriſt* their Captain, *Joſh.* 5. 14. *Heb.* 2. 10. Now no Man can be a good Soldier that watcheth not; how ſoon is he cut off by a ſurprizing *Adverſary* both *Viſible* and *Inviſible*, *non Regium eſt in Belli tempore indulgere Somno*, ſaith *Plutarch*, *Chriſt* hath made us Kings, *Rev.* 1. 6. and it is not King-like to foſter ſleep-

sleeping in a time of War: *Baanah* and *Rechab* took off *Ishbosheth*'s Head while he slept upon his Bed at Noon, 2 *Sam.* 4.5,6. So *Jael* slew *Sisera* when fast asleep, nailing him fast to the ground, *Judg.* 4. 21.

(*2dly*) 'Tis necessary in our obedience to the Great Lawgiver, who hath often commanded us to watch in Scripture, as *Mark* 13. *ver. last.* 1 *Cor.* 16. 13. 1 *Thes.* 5. 6. 1 *Pet.* 4. 7. and 5. 8. *Rev.* 3. 2. and 16. 15, &c.

Reason the Second; they are pronounced to be blessed Souls that do this Duty of *watching*, beside that in *Rev.* 16. 15. see *Luke* 12. 37, 38, 43. *terque, quaterque beati, fælices ter & amplius*, they are three times blest *there* by *Christ*, who *was sent into* the world to *bless* both believing *Jews* and *Gentiles* that watch, *Acts* 3. 26. Yea, such are not only *blessed Saints*, but they are also *blessed Angels*; for *Angels* are called [ἐγρήγορες] *Watchers*, Dan. 4. 13. Heaven is the Watch-tower of those *Holy Ones*, that never sleep, nor are ever wearied with labour as we Bodily Creatures are; not do they Eat or Drink as we do, whereby our sleep is procured, *&c.* So that this Watching-work, is likewise an *Angelical* as well as an *Evangelical* Duty, and to be [ἰσάγγελοι] *like Angels*, as *Christ* hath promised, *Luke* 20. 36. is to enjoy

an

an Heavenly State here, while upon Earth.

Reaſon the Third; The very Name and Nature of *Saintſhip* or *Chriſtianity* is to be found in this Duty of *Watching*; for *Saints* are called *the Children* (*not of the Night*, which is the proper *time of ſleeping*, but) *of the light* and of the *day*, which is the appointed ſeaſon for *Watching*, *Walking* and *Working*, 1 Theſ. 5. 5, 6, 7. Such as are *quickned* by the *Grace of Chriſt*, Epheſ. 2. 1. and are *awaked* out of the ſleep and State of ſin, *Epheſ.* 5. 14. never after this can *ſleep* the *ſleep of Death*, Pſal. 13. 3. The *Spouſe* of *Chriſt* did indeed *ſleep*, (when ſhe ſhould have been upon her watch) but *her heart was then awake*; ſo that ſhe could tell all thoſe *Titles of Love*, (*verbatim* word for word) that her beloved Lord had ſaluted her with, even while ſhe was in her half-ſleep; ſhe aggravates the foulneſs of her fault for her refuſing ſuch ſweet embraces offered them to her, *Cant.* 5. 2, 4, 5. And the *five* wiſe *Virgins* indeed nodded and napped a little, they *ſlumbred*, but they did not ſleep, (as the *five fooliſh Virgins* did) for it was only by Candle-light, their *Lamps were ſtill burning*, and they had Oil in their *Veſſels*, as well as in their *Lamps*, Matth. 25. 4, 5, *&c.* The conclu-

ſion

cluſion of that Parable is, [*Watch therefore*, for ye *know not when the Lord will come*, *ver.* 13. Thus the choiceſt and chiefeſt Saints may ſometimes be taken napping: yet the *hidden man of the heart* (as the phraſe is, 1 *Pet.* 3. 4.) is ſtill kept awake in them, as it was with the *Spouſe* above.

The Fourth *Reaſon* for our *Watching* is drawn from ſeveral Emblems of this Duty, *&c.* *Firſt* the *Hare* and the *Lion* are given by the learned Criticks as the two *Hieoroglificks* or Repreſentations, and Reſemblances of true *Chriſtians*, becauſe *Naturaliſts* do obſerve, that thoſe two *Animals* always ſleep with their Eyes wide open, *&c.*

Thus likewiſe Secondly; The *Modern Jews* uſe to ſacrifice a *white Cock* upon *New Years Day*, whoſe intrails they ordain a *Raven* to fly away with into the Fields, and then to devour them, *&c.* This is another *Emblem* of Chriſtian Vigilancy; and in this *Hiſtory* there is this *Myſtery*, the *Cock* is known to be the moſt *watchful* creature, and therefore the *Cock crowing* gives a denomination to the third part of the Night in Sacred Scripture, *Evening*, *Midnight*, *Cock-crow*, and *Morning*,] Mar. 13. 35. and ſo is a fit Reſemblance of the *watchful Chriſtian*; and yet the more fit, inſo-

insomuch as the Sacrifice must be a *white Cock*, to represent how *Christians* are *washed white* in the *Blood of Christ*, Rev. 7. 14. And there is *congruity* in the parallel of the *Raven* flying away with the white Cock's Intrails likewise; for one of the *Spouses* commendable Characters of her Beloved is, [*His locks are bushy, and black as a Raven*,] Cant. 5. 11. Thus *Christ* is the mystical *Raven*, that flies away with the infirmities and sins of every *watchful*, *white-washed Christian*, &c. *Christ* is the true *Antitype* of that *Typical Scape-goat* that did *carry away* all the *Iniquities*, *Transgressions* and *Sins* of *Israel* into the *Land* of everlasting forgetfulness, *Lev.* 16. 21. They shall all be *blotted out*, Isa. 43. 25. and none of them remembred any more, *Heb.* 8. 12. Now having answered the *first inquiry*, in shewing the *Reasons* why we ought all to be *watchful ones*.

The Second *Inquiry* is, what is this kind of *Watching* which our Lord doth command us to be found in?

Answer. There be three *Kinds* or Sorts of *Watching*: The (*1st*) is that which is *Corporeal Watching*, or that of the *Body*, which is in some cases highly commendable, as in those *Shepherds* that brought tidings of *Christ's Birth*, Luk. 2. 8, 9, 10, &c.

They were not only *Vigilantes*, but alſo were [Αγραυλοῦντες] *they abode* in *the field, keeping watch over their Flock by Night*: Tho' they had but ſorry Lodging there, yet had they a moſt Curious Canopy over their Heads, to wit, the *Heavens*, or ſtately Firmament, moſt richly beſpangled with glittering and glorious Stars; nor was this all the bleſſing that thoſe *Bodily Watchers* had, but they were near a better Bleſſing, even that Glorious Angel *Gabriel* appeared to *them* only, and not to any of the *great men* of *Jeruſalem*, &c. no nor to either of thoſe *good men*, *Zechary* or *Simeon*, &c. with theſe glad Tidings of the Birth of the Worlds Redeemer, *&c.* Therefore theſe Paſtors, or Shepherds, (of whom it is ſaid [φυλάσσοντες φυλακὰς,] *cuſtodiebant cuſtodias*, they *watched their Flocks*, Luke 2. 8.) may be a bleſſed Pattern for all good *Paſtors*, or *Goſpel Miniſters*, to *take heed* of their *Miniſtry, which they have received in the Lord, that they fulfil it*, Col. 4. 17. The Angel *Gabriel* may the ſooner appear to them; as this *Corporeal* or Bodily Watching was thus richly rewarded in thoſe watchful Shepherds; ſo the want of this firſt kind of watching was ſharply rebuked by our Lord Jeſus, ſaying to his ſleepy and ſlippery Diſciples, [*What*, *cannot* ye watch with

with me ſo much as one hour? *Matt.* 26. 40.

The Second *Sort* of *Watching* is *Diabolical*, as [*the Wicked watcheth the Righteous*, Pſal. 37. 32. of this *David* often complaineth, how they *every day wreſted his words*, Pſal. 56. 5. And thus they watched our dear Lord, (of whom *David* was both Father and Figure, as we read [ἐνοχλεῖν ἤρξαντο] *Mark* 3. 2. Theſe wicked ones lay *catching* and *carping* at his words, as the Greek word ſignifies, and that other Greek word [παρατηρούμενοι] uſed in *Luke* 14. 1. intimates that they pryed as narrowly into Chriſt's Actions, as ever *Laban* did into *Jacob*'s Stuff for his Teraphims, *Gen.* 31. 33, 34. Thus *Saul* ſent *his Spies* to *watch David*, 1 Sam. 19. 11. *to kill him.* Thus was it the ſad complaint of the Prophet *Jeremy* [*all my Familiars watched for my Halting*, &c.] Jer. 20. 10. This is a *watching* that hath the *Devil* for its *Father*, as John 8. 44. begotten upon a *depraved* Spirit which *luſteth to envy*, Jam. 4. 5. as upon the *Mother* of it, God bleſs us from this, &c.

But the Third kind of *Watching*, is that which is truly *Divine* and Spiritual, and which is not *born of the Fleſh, but of the Spirit*, John. 3. 6. and therefore this third *ſort* is not *Carnal*, much leſs Diabolical

or Deviliſh, but it is *born from Heaven*, and is an effectual means to help us to Heaven, if we live out our Lives in a careful and conſcientious obedience to this great Command of our Lord Chriſt, ſaying, [*watch*] *Matth.* 24. 42. and 26. 41. *Mark* 13. laſt, and *Luke* 12. 37, 38, 43, &c.

The *Third Inquiry* is, What is this true *Chriſtian Vigilancy*, or Spiritual *Watching Chriſt* requireth here?

Anſwer, It is (in ſhort) *Chriſtian Prudence*, vigorouſly actuated, or the actual and lively exerciſe of that Divine Wiſdom which the Lord graciouſly grants to ſuch as are *made wiſe to Salvation*, 2 Tim. 3. 15. In thoſe, and thoſe only is found a cautelous care, and a very wary watchful attention to heed and obſerve all ſuch matters as our Lord and Maker biddeth to be well heeded and obſerved. The ſimilitude runs in parallel lines betwixt the two kinds of *Sleeping* and *Watching*, both of that which is *Natural*, and of that which is *Spiritual*: For as in natural or literal Sleep, that immortal part of man (the pretious Soul) layeth (as it were) dead and buried in an Houſe of Clay; all its noble parts and gifts ſeem then to be loſt, and *Man* (all the time he lies aſleep) doth differ very little either from a Beaſt

or

or a dead Carcaſs, which made that famous General, *Epaminondas*, ſay, [*Qualem inveni, talem reliqui,*] when he was blamed for cruelty in killing his *Centinel*, whom he found *ſleaping*, to the hazard of the whole Army, *&c.* and his Apology was, [*I left him, but as I found him, &.*] He looked upon him as one dead, while he lay aſleep, *&c.* But when thoſe Vapors that cauſe Sleep are digeſted and conſumed by the Natural Heat of our Animal Spirits, and when thoſe Obſtructions of all our Senſes are thereby removed, then (ſaith the Philoſopher) [*Panduntur Meatus, Reditque opus Senſationis, id eſt, Vigilia, quæ eſt Senſuum Actio & Motus, quem Calor & Spiritus (in omnia Membra effuſus) efficit*;] that is, the Heat and Spirit being then defuſed into all our Members from Head to Foot, all the paſſages of our Senſes are opened, *&c.* and then we *awake* from our Sleep, *&c.* Even thus it is with us in that which is called a *Myſtical* and Spiritual Sleeping, and awaking out of it: It was corrupt Humours that cauſed both the *Spouſe*, and the *Wiſe Virgins* to fall into a ſlumber, and thoſe Vapors do ariſe out of the *Body* of *Sin*, that unrenewed part in us, which do for a time obſtruct the operations of a Spiritual Life in us:

But when the Spirit of Grace (which is called the *Spirit* of *Burning*, Iſa. 4. 4.) reviveth and burns up thoſe corrupt Humours in us, then is it that we awake, ariſe and go forth to ſhake our ſelves as *Samſon* did when the *Philiſtines were upon him*, Judg. 16. 20. This is called our *awaking unto Righteouſneſs*, 1 Cor. 15. 34. *and ſtanding up from the Dead*, Epheſ. 5. 14. *Awake, Awake, ſaith the Lord*, Iſa. 52. 1. *and Ariſe, Shine*, &c. Iſa. 60. 1.

The *Fourth Inquiry* is, what is the proper *Object* or *Subject* of this *Spiritual Watching?*

Anſwer, This *Chriſtian Vigilancy* is moſt highly concerned in this *Watching-work*, as it hath a Reſpect and Relation to a *double Trinity*; the firſt is a Trinity of *Friends*, to wit, the *Father*, the *Son*, and the *Holy Ghoſt*: And the *Second* is, a *Trinity* of *Foes*, namely, the *World*, the *Fleſh* and the *Devil*. All theſe both *Friends* and *Foes* are to be duly and daily watched in our *warring* the *good Warfare*, 1 Tim. 1. 18. and in *fighting the good Fight* of Faith, 1 Tim. 6. 12.

Firſt, of the *firſt*, The *Trinity* of Friends that muſt be watched is, *1ſt God the Father* muſt be watched; this Leſſon we ſhould learn from *Chriſt*, who did ſo, ſaying, *We ſpeak that we know, and teſtifie*

that

that we have ſeen, Joh. 3. 11. and farther, [*The Son can do nothing of himſelf*, but *what he ſeeth the Father do*, Joh. 5. 19. and [*the Father loveth his Son, and ſheweth him all thing that himſelf doth*,] ver. 20. And [as I *hear*, I *do*, not *doing mine own* will, but the *will of my Father who ſent me*,] ver. 30. Now if *Chriſt* (that holy Child) watched what he ſaw and heard from the Father, by that Divine and Unſpeakable Communication between them, *&c.* how ought *Chriſtians* to watch likewiſe, having an *Unction* from the *Holy* God, that *teacheth all things*, 1 Joh. 2. 20. It is ſaid of *Iſrael*, [*Veſhameru Miſhmereth*] *Cuſtodiebant Cuſtodiam*, they *watched* the Motions of the Lord in the *Cloudy Pillar*, Numb. 9. 19. they kept *Watch and Ward Night and Day* to ſee when the Cloud would ariſe, that they might be at every hour ready for removing. Thus *David ſet God always before him*, Pſal. 16. 8. So ought we to do that we may learn to *be holy* as *he is holy*, 1 Pet. 1. 15. Children ſhould learn to be like their Father, *Matth.* 5. laſt, in the *Quality* of Holineſs, tho' we cannot come up to an *Equality* of his Holineſs. Thus we ought to paſs more and more into the likeneſs of that Heavenly Pattern. If our *Eyes wait upon the Lord*, as the *Eyes* of a

Servant upon his Maſter, &c. *Pſal.* 123. 1, 2. then is there Hope concerning both our *Conformity* to God, and our *Communion* with God: We ought to watch *God's Pillar* of *Providence*, as *Iſrael* did the *Cloudy Pillar*; for there is God's Voice in the work of his Providence: Were we but *Men of Wiſdom*, to *watch*, *hear* and underſtand it aright, *Mic.* 6. 9. we ſhould learn the ſooner to follow Providence the better; the neglect whereof doth oft bring damage and detriment to us, &c. But tho' God's *Providence* may be too dark and deep for our dim Eyes to ſee, and for our dull Ears to hear; yet bleſſed be God, his *Precepts* and his *Promiſes* are all ſo plain, that he who runs may read and hear them; and our not watching them, makes us neglect Godlineſs.

The (2*d*) *Friend* is *God the Son* muſt be *watched*, for we know not either the *Day* or the *Hour* wherein he will call us either to Death, or to the Day of Judgment; every Man's Death-day is his particular Dooms-day, &c. as before, and becauſe we cannot foreſee it, therefore muſt we ever expect it, and ſpend every day as if it were our laſt day. Hereupon we are all commanded to be always upon our *watch*, and to *be alſo ready for his coming*, Matth. 24. 42, 44. where our Lord

Lord uſeth *ſeven Argument* from *ver.* 37. to the end of that Chapter, as ſo many motives to ſtir us up unto *watchfulneſs*; the *day and hour knoweth no man*, &c. ver. 36. *ideo latet unus dies, ut obſerventur omnes*, that we might watch continually for that *uncertain certain day.* The Harlot grew bold to ſin on this account, becauſe ſhe knew her Lord would not return till ſuch an appointed time, *Prov.* 7. 10, 18, 19, 20. Whereas ſecure Sinners may hear, [*Thou Fool, this night ſhall thy Soul be taken from thee*, Luke 12. 20. He *will come unlooked for*, and *Dichotomize, cut aſunder*, and tear his Soul from his Body by force, *&c. Matth.* 24.50,51. 'Tis a bleſſed *Badge*, pinn'd (as it were) upon ſanctified Souls Sleeves, that *they wait for the coming of the Lord Jeſus*, 1 Cor. 1. 2, 7. 1 Theſ. 1. 10. as it was the *character* of Old Teſtament Saints, that they *waited* for *the conſolation of Iſrael* in *Chriſt*'s firſt coming, *Luke* 2. 25. how much more ought we to lift up our Heads and Eyes for beholding the comfort of his ſecond coming, *Luke* 21. 28. *looking for, and haſtning unto it*, (as deſirous to meet him in the way,) 2 *Pet.* 3. 12. crying continually, [*O mora, Chriſto veni,*] *come Lord Jeſus, come quickly*, Rev. 22. 20. All ſuch as have taken many ſweet Turns

in

in communion with *Christ* upon the *Mountain of Spices*, to wit, (*Gospel Ordinances*, will cry, [*come*, and be *like a Roe* for swiftness,] *Cant.* 8. *last.* Upon such *Christ* comes not as a *Thief in the night*, 1 *Thes.* 5. 3. for they *love his appearing*, 2 Tim. 4. 8. and they are *blessed*, Rev. 16. 15. Such as fear to live and see that day, shall not see it to live, *&c.*

The *Third great Friend* we must *watch* is the *Holy Ghost*, for 'tis a Divine Precept, [*He that hath Ears to hear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the Churches*,] Rev. 2. 7. And this is said again and again, both in the 2*d* and in the 3*d* Chapter to all the *Seven Golden Candlesticks*, seven times over; the sense whereof is, we must *watch* and *hearken* what *God the Holy Spirit will speak*, Psal. 85. 8. not so much with the *Gristle* on the *Head*, but more by the *Ear* of the *Heart*; for God may *speak once* and *twice*, *and man perceive it not*, Job 33. 14. *until God bore our Ears*, as he did *David's*, Psal. 40. 6. and *open our Hearts* as he did *Lydias*, Acts 16. 14. and until our Lord *put* his *Finger into* the *Hole of our Ear*, and *looking up to Heaven*, he cry, [*Ephphatha*] that is, *be opened*, as he did to the Man that was possessed with a *deaf* Devil, *Mark* 7. 34. We must pray with the

Spouse

Spouſe for this purpoſe, ſaying, [*Lord*, thy *Companions hearken to thy Voice, cauſe me to hear it alſo*,] Cant. 8. 13. when this Quickning Spirit, (as he is called, *Joh.* 6. 63.) even this *Spirit of Truth cometh, he guideth us into all Truth*, Joh. 16. 13. and bleſſed is that Soul which *watcheth* the Motions of this Holy Spirit in a Sanctified Conſcience, and can diſcern a difference of ſuch *perſuaſions as come not from him that calleth us*, Gal. 5. 8. The *Steps of a good man are ordered by the Lord*, Pſal. 37. 23. *Bleſſed are they that hear the joyful ſound*, (of this breathing Spirit) *they ſhall walk, O Lord, in the light of thy Countenance*, Pſal. 89. 15. they follow the *footſteps of his Anointed*, ver. 51. and *David muſt then beſtir himſelf*, when he heard the *ſound of God's goings* upon *the Tops of the Mulberry Trees*, 2 Sam. 5. 24. This Holy Spirit is a *delicate thing*, Pſal. 143. 10. as *Junius* reads it, and therefore muſt not be *vexed*, Iſa. 63. 10. nor *grieved*, Epheſ. 4. 30. much leſs *quenched* in its motions, 1 Theſ. 5. 19. they that are *led by the Spirit are the Sons of God*, Rom. 8. 14. as *Paul* was, *Acts* 16. 6, 7. and *Simeon* was *led by the Spirit into the Temple*, Luke 2. 27. Yea, and our *Lord Jeſus* himſelf was *led up by the Spirit* into the *Wilderneſs* to conquer

the

the *Tempter* in a *Duel* upon the Devil's own ground, *Matth.* 4. 1. Thus *Abraham* (that *Father of the faithful*) *went out*, he *knew not whether*, nor when he ſhould return, nor how he ſhould ſubſiſt, *&c.* yet he well knew with whom he went, *Heb.* 11. 8. for he put himſelf as a Child into his Father's hand who called him, and the conduct of the *Holy Spirit* carried him dry-ſhod to the laſt. Thus likewiſe if we be the Sons and Daughters of *Abraham*, the *Holy Spirit* will *teach us all things*, John 14. 26. that *bleſſed Anointing* is our beſt Inſtructer, 1 *John* 2. 20. 27. We ſhould lay our ſelves (as Inſtruments) open to the *Touchings* of this Holy Spirit, and ſubmit to his Diſcipline, (which requires much ſelf-denial,) then ſhall we bring forth the *fruits of the Spirit*, Gal. 5. 22, 23. which is in *all Goodneſs* and *Righteouſneſs*, and *Truth*, Epheſ. 5. 9. And could we but *watch* its whiſperings more and better, ſo as to obey them, we ſhould not ſo oft be found in *Fundo Diaboli*, upon the Devil's ground in places of Temptation; but as the *Spirit* ſuffered not *Paul*, &c. to go unto ſuch and ſuch Places, *Acts* 16. 6, 7. even ſo would it be with us, could we but put our Souls wholly under the conduct of this Holy Spirit. If once we dare preſume

ſume to break this Divine Hedge, that *Old Serpent will ſurely bite us*, Eccleſ. 10. 8. We may not *live* at Random, and without a Rule, but we muſt mind and watch the Teachings of this *Divine Unction*, which never teacheth us any thing, but what is conſonant to the *Holy Scripture*, endited by it, 2 *Pet.* 1. 19, 20, 21.

Now come we to the *Second Trinity*, or three ſorts of *Foes* or *Enemies* to be *duly* and *daily watched.*

The *firſt Foe* is the *World*, which is a *woful Witch*, and muſt be burned for a *Witch* at the Laſt Day, 2 *Pet.* 3. 7, 10. and therefore ought we to watch this Witch well, that we may not be bewitched by it. It is well known that ſuch perſons as are bewitched, do not only loſe their Likeneſs and Beauty, but alſo do ſuffer many ſad Paroxyſms and Fits of ſtrange Diſtempers, *&c.* As all this holds true *literally* to *bewitched Bodies*, &c. ſo no leſs is it true *myſtically* to *bewitched Souls*, which are captivated by the two fair Breaſts, (or rather Botches;) this Witch the World expoſeth to their view, namely, *Pleaſure* and *Profit*. Such have horrible Fits of Madneſs, as *Saul* had, when the *Evil Spirit came upon him*, 1 Sam. 16. 14, 23, *&c.* and ſuch have *Leanneſs ſent into their Souls*, Pſal. 106. 15.

Beſides

Beſides the World muſt be well watched, becauſe it is ſuch an *Enemy* as continually beſiegeth us, and we cannot flee from it while we live in it; therefore we muſt be ſure to have a Lid or Covering for our Hearts: Thoſe *Veſſels* that wanted Coverings, the Law doomed them Unclean, *Numb.* 19. 15. and ſo are our Hearts without a *Covering of the Spirit*, Iſa. 30. 1. The Dirt of a dirty World will unavoidably be often falling into an open uncovered Heart, whereby both *Mind* and *Conſcience are defiled*, Tit. 1. 15. We ſhould keep the World *under our Feet*, where God placed it, *Pſal.* 8. 6. and *not ſet it in our Hearts*, Eccleſ. 3. 11.

The *Second Foe* to be *watched* is *Satan*, who is called [*the God of this World*,] 2 Cor. 4. 4. and dealeth with *Worldlings*, as unlucky Boys do with ſilly Horſes; they firſt catch them with a little Provender, and then backs them, whips and ſpurs them into an High Gallop, and rides them till they be tired, and at laſt lodges them in the Stable at night, *&c.* We are told how *Satan conſidered Job*, and better *conſidered him*, Job 1. 8. and 2. 3. that is, he *watched* all Advantages to Tempt that *none-ſuch Saint*, and Servant of God, *&c.* Oh then, how much more ought ſuch weak worms (as we are)

re) to *conſider him*, who ſo much *conſiders* us, and *watches* us to *take all advantages* againſt us, for we are not *ignorant* of his *Devices*, 2 Cor. 2. 11. We read of *Rizpah*, how ſhe watched her *Royal Seed* upon the Rock, *&c.* and *ſuffered* neither the *Birds* of the *Air* to *reſt on them by day*, nor the *Beaſts of the Field by night*, 2 Sam. 21. 10. Thus every *Believer* ought to do as *Rizpah* did in watching the Royal Seed, even the *Seed of God* in them, that it be not wronged either by night or day, by *Satan*, who is called both a *Prince*, *Fowl of the Air*, Epheſ. 2. 2. and likewiſe a *Beaſt of the Field*, as he is a *Roaring Lion*, 1 Pet. 5. 8. and therefore are we there bidden *to be vigilant*, leſt we be *devoured by him.* When this *Tempter* comes to us, he hath a *Threefold Errand.*

(1ſt) To find ſomething of his own Work in us, as *he found nothing* thereof in our *ſinleſs Saviour*, Joh. 14. 30.

(2dly To get betwixt us and our ſtrong Hold, *Prov.* 18. 10. *where is ſafety*, drawing us out of our *Trenches*, &c. as *Joſhuah* did the *men of Ai*, Joſh. 8. 6. And,

(3dly) To gain ſome Harbour and Houſe-room in any corner of our Hearts. *NB. Note well*, Tho' he may have power over our *Naturals*, yet he can have no power over our *Morals* without our conſent.

ſent. He cannot make his paſſage into us, unleſs we ſign his Paſs, *&c.* We muſt *watch well* hereupon, *&c.*

The *Third Foe* we muſt therefore *watch* the more is our own *Hearts*, *which are deceitful above all things*, and *deſperately wicked*, &c. Jer. 17. 9. Hereupon we are commanded [*to keep our Hearts with all diligence*, even with the beſt of our keeping, becauſe the *iſſues* of *Life*, yea and of *Death* too, flows from that Fountain, according to the *goodneſs* or *badneſs* of it,] *Prov.* 4. 23, 24, 25, 26, 27. and *Deut.* 4. 9, 10, *&c.* This *Hidden Man of the Heart*, (as 'tis called,) 1 *Pet.* 3. 4. muſt be well watched, becauſe 'tis like a *troubled Sea*, *always caſting forth Mire and Dirt*, Iſa. 57. 20, 21. 'Tis *Job*'s phraſe, [*am I a Sea*, &c. *that thou ſetteſt a watch over me?*] Job 7. 12. *Abundance of evil Thoughts*, &c. *proceed from the Heart*, Matth. 15. 18, 19, 20. The Tempter can only knock at the Door, he can neither Fire it, nor Force it open; 'tis his gaining our conſent, that lets down the *Drawbridge*, and lets him enter, *&c.* therefore 'tis not enough to have our Hearts *well watched* only, but they muſt be *well waſhed* alſo, as God ſaith, [*Waſh thine Heart from wickedneſs, that thou mayſt be ſaved; how long ſhall thy vain Thoughts lodge within thee?*]

thee,] Jer. 4. 14. Thoſe evil Thoughts ought to be watched, and ſtrictly examined, yea and clapped up cloſe Priſoners, otherwiſe they will abuſe *us*, (the *Fathers* of them) as *Lot*'s Daughters, did him, their Father; they were awake, when he was faſt aſleep, and how buſie were they to make him drunk, *&c.* *Gen.* 19. 31, to 38. Alas how oft do vain Imaginations abuſe our Harlot-like Hearts all the night long until the morning, as thoſe *men* of *Belial* in the City of *Gibeah* did the *Levite Concubine*, Judg. 19. 25, *&c.* Upon this conſideration, we ought to watch well our own Hearts, which is the Source and Seed-plot of all our ſins; for thoughts beget delight, delight begets conſent, conſent brings forth action, action produceth cuſtom, and cuſtom concludeth with laying a law of neceſſity in ſinning againſt God; *principiis obſta, venienti occurito morbo*, begin betimes to watch Diſeaſes of the Body, *&c.* how much more thoſe of the Soul; *ill principles breed ill practices.*

The *Inferences* concerning the Duty of *watching.*

(1*ſt*) 'Tis an univerſal Duty, no *Perſons*, no *Time*, no *Place* are excepted from it, [*all watch*,] Mark 13. 37.

(2*dly*) Every Perſon muſt watch the whole Man, both all the Members of the Body, and all the Faculties of the Soul. Alas, all have been [ὅπλα τῆς Ἀδικίας] *weapons* of *wickedneſs*, Rom. 6. 13, 19. No *Roman General* was allowed the Honour of a Triumph, until they had won five Victories; ſo nor may we truly *Triumph*, before we have conquered our *five Senſes*. How ought we to watch them; many have died of a wound in the Eye, &c. *Job cover'd* his Eye with a *Covenant*, Job 31. 1. Pſal. 119. 37. If our *Eye* offend us, we muſt pull it out of the *Old Adam*, and get it ſet into the *New Man*, &c. How ought we *watch our Tongues*, Pſal. 39. 1, 2. and 141. 3. Eccleſ. 5. 1, 2, 3. Jam. 3. 2, &c.

(3*dly*) Secure Souls, that dare neglect their watch, conſider not that *their way* is *dark and ſlippery*, Pſal. 35. 6. and that this world is like the *Vale* of *Siddim*, *full of Slime-pits*, Gen. 14. 10. into which we may ſlip before we be aware; therefore ought we [ὀρθοποδεῖν, *to walk warily*] Gal. 2. 14. ſignifying, that we lift not up one Foot, until we find firm footing for the other; and we ought to [*walk circumſpectly*] Epheſ. 5. 15. the word [ἀκριβῶς] ſignifie to *walk exactly*, by Line and by Rule; its Etymology is [εἰς ἀκρον βαίνειν a going

going up to the very top of Godlineſs, walking along as in a Frame, and keeping the King's high way, not *turning* to *right* hand or *left*, Prov. 4. 27.

(4*thly*) We muſt learn from the Prophet to ſay, [*I will ſtand upon my watch, and ſet me upon the Watch-tower*, and *will watch to ſee what God will ſay unto me*, &c.] Hab. 2. 1, 2, 3. Now there is no watching without Eyes, which when *Samſon* had loſt, then a little Boy could lead him. *Solomon* ſaith, that [*a prudent man* foreſeeth an evil and hideth himſelf, *&c.*] *Prov.* 22. 3. 'Tis a good obſervation, the Greek word [σοφος] *a wiſe man* is derived from the Hebrew word [*Tſopheh*] *ſpeculator*, one ſtanding always upon his watch.

(5*thly*) Let us rejoyce in this, that when we neglect to watch over our ſelves, we have a gracious God, to *watch over us night* and *day*, &c. Iſai. 27. 3. and *keeps the Feet of his Saints*, 1 Sam. 2. 9. 1 Pet. 1. 5. Jude ver. 1. we may be loſt, *Reſpectu Rei*, (of our ſelves) not *Reſpectu Dei* *of God*) Joh. 6. 39. and 10. 28, 29. and 17. 12. Jude ver. 24. 2 Tim. 1. 12. The Apoſtle *Peter* ſaith, [*the end of all things is at hand, therefore we muſt be ſober and wateh unto Prayer*,] 1 Pet. 4. 7. This is the laſt part of our Spiritual Ar-

mour; *Ephes. 6. 18. Matth. 26. 41.* which if (by the helping hand of our gracious God) we be made able to improve aright in our Christian Warfare, then shall we be blest to rejoyce with the blessed Spouse of *Christ*, crying [*It is the Voice of my Beloved, behold he cometh leaping over Mountains, and skipping over Hills,*] Cant. 2. 8. *Remarks* upon it are,

(1*st*) *Watching* and *Praying* Souls *hear this*, and *hear this* [*Kol-Dodi* Heb. the *Voice of their Beloved*; thus the *Watching* and *Praying* Prophet had his joyful tidings of the ruine of *Babylon*, and of the restoration of *Sion*, Hab. 2. 1, 3. and Chap. 3. and this was likewise the Spouse's work here, when she was *brought* into the *Bridegrooms Banquetting-house*, and his *Banner of Love was over her*, Cant. 2. 4. yea, and his left Hand was under her Head, and his right hand embraced her after she had prayed for some of *Christ's Cordials* to be handed in to her *Soul which was sick of Love*, ver. 5, 6. and tho' she charged others not to awaken him, &c. *ver.* 7. yet she doth it her self, but not *before he pleased*; for immediately he brings the *Flagons of Wine* and *Apples* of Comfort; she so earnestly cried for; and this she doth acknowledge in this Divine Rapture [*Kol Dodi,*] 'tis the *Voice of my Beloved*, ver. 8. and in Chap. 5. 2. Also,

Remark the Second; As *Christ's Face* is comely to the *Eyes* of gracious Souls, [*White and Ruddy*, Cant. 5. 10. yea, and *altogether Lovely* (as well as *all asunder*,) ver. 11, 12, *&c.* 16. So *Christ*'s Voice is comfortable to their *Ears*: Oh how the very hearing of it put the Spouse into a *Transport*, having a present sense of her Lord's approaching to make some gracious discoveries of himself to her by his Voice. Oh how wonderfully *refreshing*, yea *ravishing* was it to this Love-sick Spouse, and 'tis no less to Love-sick Souls. And

The (3*d*) *Remark* is, among all the *five Senses*, the Sense of Hearing hath this surpassing Excellency, that God hath ordained the great grace of *Faith must come by hearing*, Rom. 10. 17. As Satan had made Man's Ear the *instrument of Man's destruction*, when our first Parents listned sooner to the Tempters *base Lies* (who was a *Liar* from the *beginning*, Joh. 8. 44.) than to the *blessed Truths* of the God of Truth; even so our Gracious Father hath made the same sense of hearing to be the *Organ of Man's Salvation*, &c.

The (4*th*) *Remarke* is, There is a natural Deafness in fain mankind: 'Tis not not so much *God's Silence*, as it is our *Dulness*; for [*God speaks once and twice*,

and *Man perceiveth it not,*] Job 33. 14. or it may be our *Childiſhneſs*, as it was in the young Child *Samuel*, when he miſtook God's call for old *Ely*'s, 1 *Sam.* 3. 4,6,8,10. 'Tis worſt of all to be like the *Deaf Adder*, that *will not hearken*, &c. Pſal. 58. 4, 5. This is our caſe, until *Chriſt* come and cry [*Ephphatha*] *Ears be open'd*, Mark 7. 34, 35.

The (5*th*) *Remark* is, It is a ſad diſpenſation to lie any long time under Divine Deſertions, and not to *hear the Voice of our Beloved* neither Week-day, nor Lord's day. This was *David*'s outcry, [*My God, my God, why haſt thou forſaken me*, I cry night and day, but *thou beareſt me not*,] (ſo as not to anſwer me with thy Voice,) Pſal. 22. 1, 2. yet he keeps high and honourable Thoughts of even a *ſilent God*, ſaying, [but thou *art Holy, and inhabits Praiſes*, &c.] ver. 3. and he complains alſo, [*Lord, how long wilt thou be Angry againſt the Prayers of thy People?*] Pſal. 80. 4. And thus it was with the *Spouſe*, *complaining*, [I *called* him, but he *gave me no anſwer*, Cant. 5. 6. this is ſad to Love-ſick Souls, *&c.*

The (6*th*) *Remark* is, The Love-ſick Spouſe, even while ſlumbering, can know the *Voice of her Beloved*, Cant. 5. 2, 3, *&c.* where ſhe ſaith, [*it is the Voice of my Be-*

Beloved that *knocketh*, &c.] not only becauſe it was but an half-ſleep, for the *hidden man of her heart*, (ſo called, 1 *Pet.* 3. 4.) *was awake*; but alſo becauſe of her former frequent knowledge and acquaintance with this [*Kol-Dodi*] or her *Beloved*'s Voice. Thus it is common among us, that we know whoſe Voice it is that calleth us, when foregoing Acquaintance hath made it familiar to us, tho' we be betwixt ſleeping and waking, eſpecially if we ſhake our ſelves as *Samſon* did, *Judg.* 16. 20.

The (7*th*) *Remark* is, When we have not been ſo dutiful and attentive to *Chriſt*'s Voice, as we ought to be, ſo as to obey his Call, *&c.* yet then muſt we make ſerious reflections upon our own negligence, and ſeverely cenſure our ſelves for refuſing ſuch bleſſed Embracements as the Soul-ſick Spouſe did, repeating with regret every *Title* of Love, and every *Accent* he had given her, and every *Action* he had done in order to his own reception with her: All along aggravating her own fault and folly, that a King ſhould court a Beggar and be rejected, *Cant.* 5. 3, 5, 8.

The (8*th*) *Remark* is, This *Kol-Dodi*, &c. is an abrupt paſſage, proceeding from a pang of Love, whereof ſhe was ſick, and

now lies (as it were) languishing at Hope's Hospital, ever listning and Hearkning to hear her Bridegrooms Voice; and when she heard it, she rejoiced at it, not only as the Damsel *Rhoda* did to hear the Voice of *Peter*, Acts 12. 14. but as *Elizabeth* did when our *Lord's Mother saluted* her, as *her Babe*, so the *Spouses Heart* leaped within her, *Luke* 1. 40, 41.

The *(9th) Remark* from the Text, *Cant.* 2. 8. is, The *Voice of Christ* is a very *pretious Voice* unto all *gracious hearts*; as here to the Spouse: she first heard his Voice, and then cries, *behold he comes. John Baptist* was call'd a *Voice* to *prepare a way for Christ's coming*, Mark 1. 2, 3. So the *Spouse* here looks upon *Christ's Voice* as a forerunner of himself, and of his coming to her to communicate more of his Graces and Comforts to her Lovesick Soul. No sooner doth *Christ*'s sweet Voice enter into our Ears, and sinks down into our Hearts, but presently we are *made to hear of Joy and Gladness*, and *our broken Bones begin to Rejoice*] Psal. 51. 8. *the Spouse tells her Friends so*, &c.

Enquiry how we may know the Voice of Christ, our Beeloved, from the Voice of False Lovers, *&c.*

Answer the (1st) There is much difficulty oftentimes to discern a difference, because

becauſe *Satan* can imitate the Servants of God, his Magicians did the like to *Moſes*'s Miracle with their Enchantments, *Exod.* 7. 11. until God did convince them, *Exod.* 8. 19. yea, and plagued themſelves alſo for their Cheat, *Exod.* 9. 11. nor could *Samuel* himſelf have ſpoken more gravely, more devoutly, and more divinely than *Satan* did unto *Saul*, who hired the Witch of *Endor* to conjure him up in *Samuel*'s ſimilitude, 1 *Sam.* 28. 15, to 20. *Satan himſelf is transformed into an Angel of Light; it is no marvel then, if his Miniſters, Falſe Apoſtles, Deceitful Workers, transform themſelves into the Apoſtles of Chriſt*, &c. 2 Cor. 11. 13, 14, 15. and the *cry* of *Folly* is like the *cry* of *Wiſdom*, Prov. 9. 4, 16. the Voices are alike, and the Words are the ſame in both, [*Whoſo is ſimple, let him turn in hither*, &c. yet are they diſtinguiſhable by many *Characters*.

Anſwer the (2*d*) The *Voice of our Beloved* doth differ from the *Voice of Strangers*, (which *Chriſt' ſheep will not hear, nor follow*, John 10. 4, 5, 8.) By theſe few *Diſcriminations*, The *firſt Diſcriminating Character* is, *Chriſt's Voice* hath in it ſelf a ſelf-diſcovering property; 'tis the excellency of it, to bring along with it its own Evidence; how do we know that

that Light is Light, but by that evidence of Light which it hath in it ſelf, *&c.* and thus Fire doth diſcover it ſelf by its own *Heat*, as well as *Light*.

The *Second Character* is, *Chriſt's Voice* is attended with *Authority* and *Power*, inſomuch as his Hearers ſtood *aſtoniſhed at his Doctrine*, Luke 4. 32. and *they were amazed*, ſaying, *What a Word is this?* for with *Authority* and *Power* he *caſteth out Devils*, ver. 36. Thus *David* tells us, [the *Voice of the Lord* is powerful, and *full of Majeſty*, it *breaketh* the *talleſt Cedars*, and the *ſtrongeſt Oaks*, &c. it *maketh* the *Hindes* to *Calve*, (which is the moſt difficult Birth of all Females, *Job* 39. 1. they being ſo narrow-made Creatures, *&c.*) And the *Voice of the Lord* ſtilleth the Rage of Rivers and Seas, by *ſitting upon the Floods*, and keeping them under his Call,] *Pſal.* 29. 4, 5, 6, 7, to 11.

The *Third Character* is, The *Voice of Chriſt reacheth the Heart*, it *maketh manifeſt the Secrets of the Hearts of Unbelievers* at a Sermon-hearing, and cauſeth them to *fall down* and *worſhip God*, and to ſay, that *God is in his Prophets of a truth*,] 1 Cor. 14. 24, 25. Thus when *Chriſt* ſpeaketh *with a ſtrong hand* (as he did to the *Prophet*, Iſa. 8. 11.) to any perſon, then *Chriſt opens the Heart*, (as

he

he did the *Heart* of *Lydia*, Acts 16. 14.) tho' it be called a *ſmall ſtill Voice*, 1 Kings 19. 12. yet having the *Lord in it*, it is *mighty* in its *Operations* for *pulling down of the ſtrong holds of Satan*, and *caſting down every high thing*, that exalts its ſelf againſt God in us, 2 *Cor.* 10. 4, 5. *Chriſt's Voice* hath *Spirit* and Life in it, *John* 6. 63. and therefore is it only effectual to break the heart for ſin, to diſſolve the Stone, and to mortifie ſin in it, and to quicken it for God, and to *change it into the Image of God*, &c. 2 Cor. 3. 18.

The *Fourth Character* is, *Chriſt's Voice* calleth from evil to good, from ways of wickedneſs to ways of holineſs, it always cries, [*come up hither to God*] Rev. 11. 12. but never [*go down thither to ſin*,] this *latter* is the Voice of an *Egyptian*, and when we meet it, we muſt (with *Moſes*) *ſlay it*; but the *former* is an *Hebrew* Voice, which we *muſt ſave alive* as *he* did, Exod. 2. 11, 12. *Chriſt's Breath* or *Spirit* is called a *Spirit* of *Holineſs*, Rom. 1. 3. and always calls us to be *Holy as he is Holy*, 1 Pet. 1. 15. and 2 Pet. 3. 11. *Truth* calls to forſake the Fooliſh, *Prov.* 9. 6. but *Error* calls to Fleſhly Delights, *ver.* 15, 16, 17. therefore we muſt reject that Voice, which promotes not the *power of Godlineſs*.

The

The *Fifth Character* is, *Christ's Voice* is alway consonant to the Light and *Law of Nature*. This is the remainder of God's Image in faln mankind, some sherd whereof do still remain after *Adam's fall*, whereby *Cain* knew that *Murther*, *Joseph* that *Adultery*, his Brethren that *Theft*, &c. were all heinous sins, long before the Law was given by *Moses*. Hereby likewise [the *Gentiles who have not the Law, do by Nature the things contained in the Law; these are a Law to themselves, which shew the work of the Law written in their Hearts*, their *Conscience bearing witness*, and either *excusing*, or *accusing*, &c.] Rom. 2. 14, 15. Therefore that Voice which crosseth the Voice of an awakened Conscience is not *Christ's Voice*.

The *Sixth Character* is, the Voice of *Christ* is alway congruous to the Light and Law of the Holy Scripture; for *Christ* (who is called *the word*, John 1. 1.) cannot contradict himself, *He is not Yea and Nay, but in him was Yea*, &c. 2 Cor. 1. 17, 18, 19, 20. He is the same both in his Voice that is spoken, and in his Word that is written; therefore our Lord saith, [*to the Law and to the Testimony, if any speak not according to this word, it is because they have no Light in them,*] Isa. 8. 20. The *Word written* must be the

Rule

Rule of our Lives, becauſe it ſhall be our *Judge after* Death, as our Lord ſaith, [the *word that I have ſpoken, the ſame ſhall judge you at the laſt day*,] John 12. 48. Rom. 2. 16. *according to my Goſpel*: So that if any pretended Voice of *Chriſt* come to us, which holds not congruity with the *Scipture* of *Truth*, Dan. 10. 21. 1 Joh. 4. 1. we muſt look on it as a Deluſion, *&c.*

The *Seventh Character* is, The *Voice of Chriſt* always calls to *weighty matters*, and that in *order*, &c. but never to trifling Deeds, and in diſorder and confuſion. Thus *Nehemiah perceived* it was *none of God's call*, that called him *from God's work*, no fewer than five or ſix times, to trifling diſcourſes with them in private, *&c.* Neh. 6. 4, 5, 6, 12. and thus *Paul* was *exaſperated* againſt the *Divining Damſel* for *diſturbing* them *many days* from their *Praying-work*, &c. Acts 16. 16, 17, 18.

The *Eighth and Laſt Character*, (to mention no more for brevity ſake) is, *Chriſt's Voice* doth put the Right Hearer of it into an *acting* frame and *doing* poſture; for thus he ſaith, [*Why call ye me Lord, Lord*, and *do not the things that I ſay*, Luke 6. 46. *'Tis not Hearers, but Doers whom God reſpects*, Rom. 2. 13.

Hearers

Hearers only and *not Doers deceive themſelves*, Jam. 1. 22. 'Tis not the *hearing* and *talking*, but the *walking* and *working Chriſtian* that *Chriſt* loveth, *&c.*

Inferences from hence, *(1ſt)* That we may hear the Voice of *Chriſt*, we muſt come to every Ordinance in publick, and to every Duty in private in an hearkning poſture; [*I will hearken what the Lord will ſay*, &c. Pſal. 85. 8. [*Speak, Lord, for thy Servant heareth,*] 1 Sam. 3. 19. [*To hearken is better than the fat of Rams*, 1 Sam. 15. 22. [*To day if you will hear his Voice, harden not your hearts,*] Heb. 3. 7. but liſten and hearken with *bored Ears*, Pſal. 40. 6, *&c.*

(2dly) Pray for a *Diſcerning Spirit*, 1 Cor. 12. 10. that we miſtake not the Younger for the Elder, as blind *Iſaac* did, *Gen.* 27, 21, 22. The Voice may be *Jacob*'s, when the Hands may be like the rough Hands of *Eſau*, &c. and we may think that we are embracing our beloved *Rachel* all the night, when in the morning-light, it proves a Blear-eyed *Leah*, as it was impoſed upon *Jacob* by churliſh *Laban*, Gen. 29. 25. and therefore muſt we pray for *God's Spirit to lead us into all truth*, John 14. 26. if it do *witneſs with our Spirits*, Rom. 8. 16. This is the *ultimum*, or *laſt appeal*; then may we ſay with

with the *Apoſtle*, [*I have the mind of Chriſt*,] 1 Cor. 2. 16. and with the Prophet, [*If I be deceived, my God hath deceived me*, Jer. 20. 7. For the Spirit of Truth doth not only aſſure us of our intereſt in *Chriſt*, but alſo of the truth of the Voice of *Chriſt* to us, to prevent miſtakes, *&c.*

(3dly) Prove all things, and *hold faſt that which is good*, 1 Theſ. 5. 21. Try before we truſt, take nothing upon truſt; he was a fond Philoſopher that ſaid, [he had rather *err* with *Plato*, than follow the Truth with others;] whereas [*we ſhould follow any that follow Chriſt*,] 1 Cor. 11. 1. [*Wo to them that call evil good*, &c.] Iſa. 5. 20. therefore ſhould we ſay with *Iſaac*, [*Come near my Son, that I may feel thee*,] Gen. 27. 21. And *John turned to ſee the Voice of him that ſpake to him*, Rev. 1. 12. And the ſame Apoſtle ſaith, [*our Hands have handled* of the *word of Life*,] 1 John 1. 1. the *Ear tryeth words*, &c. Job. 12. 11. As *Timothy muſt lay hands ſuddenly on no man*, 1 Tim. 5. 22. So we on *no Thing*, *no Voice*, &c. for we may hear a *noiſe* only of *Chriſt*, but not the diſtinct articulate Voice of Chriſt, *&c.* as thoſe that journied with *Paul* did, *&c. Acts* 9. 7. with *Acts* 22. 9. and 'tis ſaid of thoſe *Chriſt-killers*, [*that they knew not the*

Voices

Voices of the Prophets, &c. Acts 13. 27.

(4*thly*) The true Voice of *Christ* discovers it self by its effects, as (1) It makes our hearts *leap* at it within us, as the *Babe leaped* in *Elizabeths Womb*, when only the *Mother of our Lord* saluted her, Luke 1. 44. much more when our Lord himself saluteth us, &c. our Hearts then must leap for Joy, &c. (2) It makes our *Hearts burn within us*, as it did to those two Disciples, *Luke* 24. 32. *Christ's Voice* ever makes a warm Heart, &c.

(5*thly*) *If we be of God*, we shall hear the Voice of *Christ*, and his *word* will have *room in us*, John 8. 37, 47. *and every one that is of the Truth heareth Christ's Voice*, John 18. 37. by this we may know both *whose* and *what* we are as to our *State*, &c.

(6*thly*) and *Lastly*, A *Love-sick Soul* cannot bear any long silence from *Christ*, &c. *there was silence in Heaven* only *for half an hour*, Rev. 8. 1. that was a *wonder*, but to hear nothing of *Christ's Voice* for whole *Days*, *Weeks* and *Months*, &c. is a great grievance to a gracious Heart; this made *David* cry, [*Hide not thy Face from thy Servant, for I am in trouble; hear me speedily*,] Psal. 69. 17. And the *Spouse* said, [*Thy Companions hear thy Voice, Oh, cause me to hear it also*,]

Cant.

Cant. 8, 13. [*Hope deferred, makes the Heart ſick,*] Prov. 13. 12. Unleſs God ſay to us, as he ſaid to *Moſes*, [*ſpeak no more to me concerning this matter,*] Deut. 3. 25, 26. Thus God ſometimes ſaith ſo to us in his Works, when he declares his Will contrary to our Wills. Thus *David* prayed for the Life of his Child, when God had decreed its Death, 2 *Sam.* 12. 16, 17, 18. And our Saviour himſelf prayed [*let this Cup paſs from me*, yet *with ſubmiſſion to his Fathers Will*, Matth. 26. 19, *&c.*

CHAP. V.

The Characters of True Conquerors through the Strength of Chriſt.

THE Enquiry is, How may this Conqueſt be made manifeſt to us, that we may ſing *victoria* with *Deborah*, ſaying, [*Oh, my Soul, thou haſt trodden down ſtrength,*] Judg. 5. 21. and ſay with *Paul*, [*I can do all things through Chriſt that ſtrengthens me,*] Phil. 4. 13. and we are

more than Conquerors in [*all theſe things through him that loved us*,] Rom. 8. 37.

Anſwer, This may be known by many manifeſt *Characters*.

As the *(1ſt) Character* is, Can we ſay in the *witneſſings* of the *Holy Ghoſt*, together with the *witneſs of our own Conſciences*, as Rom. 9. 1. that we find the Lord hath performed (in ſome meaſure) that firſt Goſpel-promiſe of *Chriſt's breaking the Serpents Head in us?* Gen. 3. 15. Hath Satan loſt his Headſhip or Dominion over us, *Rom. 6. 14.* he is limited, and muſt have leave to hurt Hogs, *&c.* This Text, *Gen.* 3. 15. the *Romiſh Church* hath moſt groſly corrupted, aſcribing that Honourable Act to the *Virgin Mary*; the Hebrew is, [*Hu Jeſhupheka Reſh*] *ille conteret Caput*, not *illa*; for [*Hu*] is the Maſculine Gender, ſignifies *He*, not [*Hi*] the Feminine, which ſignifies [*She:*] and ſo *Zerah*, Hebr. for Seed, is Maſculine alſo. Therefore the Popiſh Reading [*She for He*] muſt needs be notoriouſly falſe, becauſe it gives the *Glory* of *Chriſt to her*, who her ſelf (as well as we) was ſaved by the Merit, Value and Vertue of *Chriſt*, as *She* her ſelf doth acknowledge, ſaying, [*My Spirit rejoiceth in the Lord my Saviour*,] Luke 1. 47. Had *She* had no ſin (as the *Romaniſts* ſay,] then had *She* no need of this

this *Saviour*, whom She called [*my Saviour*;] and why did She (if ſtood in no need of him) ſo rejoice in him: The Greek word is [ἠγαλλίασε,] ſignifying, as if She *danced a Gallyard* in her tranſports of joy in him, reckoning that her intereſt in this her Saviour did make it [*Hilary Term*,] that is, a *Merry Time* with her: Then if *She* her ſelf ſtood in need of a *Saviour*, how abſurd it is in the *Papiſts* to pray to her as to a Saviour for others. *Chryſoſtom* ſaith, [had not that bleſſed Virgin carried *Chriſt* [ἐν κεφαλῇ] in her Heart, as well as [ἐν χερσὶ] in her Arms, (as well as before in her *Womb*,) She had never her ſelf got into Heaven; therefore we muſt not ſet the Crown upon the wrong Head, upon the Mother of our Lord. but upon the *Lord* himſelf, to *break the Serpents Head*; and a wound in the Head is moſt dangerous and mortal, and therefore the Serpent doth ſecure his Head with the hazard of his whole Body, knowing that his Life lies in his Head moſtly, [*Intorto Capite, ſequitur Corpus*,] if the Serpent can ſcrew in his Head, he can eaſily wreſt in his Body. Now the Phraſe [*Conterit Caput*,] ſignifies he ſhall knock thee on the Head, he ſhall crack thy Crown; therefore this muſt be our ſerious enquiry, Whether *Chriſt*, *in us*, *the hope of Glory*,

Col. 1. 27. (who *dwells in our Hearts by Faith*, Ephes. 3. 17. and who is the *Stronger Man*) hath yet come upon this *Strong Man*, and *overcome him*, and *taken from his Armour wherein he trusted*, &c. Luke 11. 21, 22. Hath our Lord, in us, drawn the Dragon out of his Den, where he lived long peaceably, that is, in our Heatrs all the *time of our ignorance*? Acts 17. 30. And hath he broke the Head of the Tempter, so that he leaves nothing for us to combat with, save only *Tail-Temptations*! And Christ strengthens his Members both to carry on, and to compleat this Spiritual Combat, and to become *more than Conquerors* at the last, as blessed *Paul* acknowledgeth in three places of Holy Scripture. The first is, [*It is not I that lives*, but it is *Christ that liveth in me*, &c. Gal. 2. 20.] The *Second Place* is Rom. 8. 37. where he ascribeth the Honour of our being Conquerors (as before to the *Life* of *Christ* in him, so) to the *Love of Christ* to him, and to all true *Christians*: And the third place is *Phil.* 4. 13. where he gives the glory of his one sort of Omnipotency to the *power of Christ* in him.

The *(2d) Character* of a *Conqueror* is, If we find, by real experience, that we do gain ground of our Spiritual Enemies, (those *Tail-Temptations*) as *Joshuah* did

win

win ground upon the curſed *Canaanites* in his daily Wars againſt them: Firſt, he conquered that Land which lay upon the far ſide of *Jordan*, and then paſſing over that River, he conquered them on the other ſide alſo, having the bleſſed *Meſſiah* along with him, who ſaid to *Joſhuah*, [as *Captain of the Lord's Hoſt am I come*,] Joſh. 5. 15. yet ſometimes we find how hardly he got the Victory over the City *Ai*, when *Achan*'s ſin proved too ſtrong for *Joſhuah*'s proweſs, *Joſh.* 7. 5. Inſomuch that he won ground of the Enemy (as it were) by Inches only, according to the word of the Lord, ſaying, [*The Lord thy God will drive out thoſe Nations, before thee, by little and little*, and *not all at once*, &c.] Deut. 7. 22. and the Lord did order and over-rule it there for *Iſraels* good. Thus it is in our *Spiritual Warfare*, tho' God's promiſe is to *tread down Satan under our Feet ſhortly*, Rom. 16. 20. yet God will not make his promiſes good too ſoon. It was for their own good, as in that fore-named Scripture, [*leſt the Beaſts of the Field increaſe upon thee*,] for he is a *God* of *Judgment*, and *waiteth* to give us his Mercies, when they may do us moſt good; and therefore [*bleſſed are they that wait for him*,] Iſa. 30. 18. He gives his Mercy in the beſt Seaſon, tho' not ſo

ſoon as we do deſire; we long to conquer our *Corruptions* (thoſe curſed *Canaanites*) in one day, which our Lord hath ordered and ordained to be the work of our whole Lives; our Corruptions, as the *Canaanites*, are left yet unſubdued, only to prove us in our owning God, *&c.* Judg. 2. 21, 22. and Judg. 3. 4. This *mortifying of ſin*, (as well as *fortifying of grace*,) is *penſum Diurnum & Perpetuum*, both a daily and a perpetual Task. God will keep a Tedder at our Foot to keep us humble. *Paul* muſt have a *Thorn in the Fleſh*, a *Meſſenger of Satan to buffet him*, leſt he ſhould *be exalted above meaſure* with his late *Rapture* into *Paradiſe*, 2 Cor. 12. 2,3,4,7. There will be work enough for the exerciſe of Grace, till it be turned into Glory. Notwithſtanding the *Canaanites*, with their *Iron Chariots*, were ſo ſtrong, that *Iſrael* could not drive them out, *Joſh.* 17. 16. yet the *faithful God*, (as he is called,) *Deut.* 7. 9. and *who will not be ſlack*, ver. 10. did promiſe that they ſhould *drive them out*, tho' they had *Iron Chariots*, and tho' *they were ſtrong*, Joſh. 17. 18. the *Lord of Hoſts* was too mighty for them. Thus we complain concerning our Corruptions, that they fall not faſt enough by *mortifying Grace*; but we muſt know for our Comfort, [our *Faithful*

God

God will not be ſlack, (as before) for killing our curſed *Canaanites*. He indeed may ſeem to be *ſlow* in our thoughts, yet he is never *ſlack*, but will be ever ſure; he will not ſuffer his *faithfulneſs* to *fail*, nor *alter the thing that is gone out of his Lips*, Pſal. 89. 33. what he *ſpeaks* with his *Mouth*, he *fulfils* with his *Hand*, 1 Kings 8. 24. he will *do* what he *hath ſaid*, 2 Sam. 7. 25. whether *ancient promiſes*, Tit. 1. 1, 2. which never failed in any Age; no nor his *Menaces* neither, *Zeph.* 3. 5. nor will he fail in this of *treading Satan under our Feet ſhortly*, Prov. 16. 20. In the mean time let us enquire, Do we gain ground of our Spiritual Enemies? doth the *Houſe of Saul* in us wax *weaker and weaker*, and the *Houſe of David* in us grow *ſtronger and ſtronger*, as 2 Sam. 3. 1. can we feel our Lord a *deſtroying the works* of the *Devil* in us, *Heb.* 2. 14. 1 *John* 3. 8. tho' as yet they be not altogether deſtroyed? Are we *daily dying to ſin*, tho' not as yet wholly dead to it? even this may enſure us of Victory at laſt; let us compare time with time: may we but experience, how heretofore the fleſhly law in thee had thy Sabbaths, thy Time, thy Strength, yea thy very Heart and Affections; but now by the power of Renewing Grace) the Law of the Spirit

in thee hath reſcued (at laeſt) a little of all the aforeſaid, and ſubjected that little under the *Law* of the *Spirit*; ſo that thou finds thoſe two contrary Laws now in thee, to wit, the *Law of the Members*, and the *Law* of the *Mind*, *warring againſt each other*, &c. Rom. 7. 15, to 23. which makes thee cry out, (as the *betrothed Damſelf* did in *the field*, when ſhe was aſſaulted by a *man too ſtrong for her*, Deut. 22. 27. as *Amnon* was too ſtrong for *Tamar*, 2 Sam. 13. 14.) ſo doſt thou cry out with *Paul*, [*Oh wretched man that I am, who ſhall deliver me from the Body of Death?* and *thank God* (with him) that *Jeſus Chriſt our Lord is thy Deliverer*; ſaying likewiſe, (as he did) ſo then *with the Mind* I my *ſelf do ſerve the Law of God*; but with the *Fleſh* the *Law of Sin*, Rom. 7. 24, 25. If we find our ſelves in no worſe a condition than that of the Holy Apoſtle himſelf, this cannot be uncomfortable and diſcouraging to us; the ſame conflict betwixt two contrary Laws is common to all Chriſtians: For as *Paul* had informed the believing *Romans* of it as above: So he affirms, yea, and *Confirms* the ſame Truth to the believing *Galatians*, ſaying, [*walk in the Spirit*, and ye *ſhall not fulfil the luſts* thereof; for the *Fleſh luſteth* againſt the Spirit, and

and the *Spirit againſt the Fleſh*, and theſe are *contrary* the *one to the other*; ſo that ye cannot *do the things* that *ye would*,&c.] Gal. 5. 16, 17. The meaning whereof is, that as we cannot do the *good* which we would do, becauſe the *Fleſh* doth hinder us; ſo we cannot do the *evil* which we would (by the unrenewed part of our wills) do, becauſe the Spirit hinders us. Now may we but find by ſound experience that the *Law* of the *Spirit gains ground* of the Law of the *Fleſh* in us; this is a comfortable Character, that we ſhall be Conquerors in this Spiritual Conflict. Thus Satan's Aſſaults now are feebler than heretofore againſt us, like that of the old *Gauls*, of whom it is ſaid, *prior impetus eſt pluſquam Virorum, poſterior minus quam fœminarum*, more than Men at firſt, but leſs than Women at laſt.

The Third Comfortable *Character* of a Conqueror is, that he is able to break the Ranks of the Van-guard, or Fore-front of his Enemies, and ſo force them to draw back. 'Tis a great encouragement to a General to ſet his Feet, and the Feet of his Army upon the ſame ground where his Adverſaries pitched their Battalia's againſt him; he knows, if once they begin to *flinch*, they will ſoon alſo begin to *flee*, eſpecially if he can gain their moſt

moſt advantagious ground from which (as from an higher ſtanding) they did moſtly annoy him: but much more if he can ſhatter and diſorder their Front, where the men of greateſt Gallantry are ever moſt politickly placed; if once they come into confuſion, and be (as we ſay) hand over head; then he doth more eaſily break in upon them, and ſo rout them out of the field. It was once a notable ſtratagem of an *Engliſh General*, that when he came up cloſe to the face of his Foes, he ordered his Army to make a loud and univerſal outcry [they *run*, in the *Rear*, they *run*, they *run*;] this Cry did ſo daunt the Front, (who feared it to be true) that thereby both the Van and the Rear did run away indeed. Thus is it with us in our Spiritual Warfare; our Spiritual Enemies do not war againſt us as is done in a Duel, (but *one to one*) but here is many againſt one; thoſe *fleſhly luſts* that *fight* againſt *our Souls* are not one only, but many in the plural number, 1 *Pet.* 2. 11. And the manifeſt works of the Fleſh are many: There be no fewer than *ſeventeen* of them reckoned up, *Gal.* 5. 19, 20, 21. and yet not all by much, for *Paul* comes off with (and *ſuch like*, &c.] Yea the ſame Apoſtle calls our Adverſary, [*A Body of Sin*,]

Rom.

Rom. 6. 6. becauſe it wars againſt us in a *full Body*, made up of many of *Satan's* Warriors, a very great Army. Now if we go out in the *ſtrength of the Lord* as *David* did, *Pſal.* 71. 16. and take the *Captain of our Salvation*, Heb. 2. 10. along with us, (who *teacheth our hands to war*, and our *fingers to fight*, Pſal. 144. 1.) then are we made able to *run through a Troop* with *David*, Pſal. 18. 29. and to *leap over the Wall*, yea and to break even a Bow of Steel by our Arms, *ver.* 34. Alas, we have all cauſe to cry (as *Leah* did, *Gen.* 30. 11. *behold a Troop cometh*, yea ſuch a Troop of fleſhly Luſts as overcomes *Gad*) for a while; but this is our comfort, that *Gad* doth overcome at laſt, *Gen.* 49. 19. If we can but break the Ranks of our Spiritual Enemies, ſo that they cannot come up in a full Body againſt us as formerly, then is there *hope in Iſrael concerning this thing*, that we ſhall better conquer them one after another when they are ſcattered aſunder, (*divide & impera*, divide and rule ſaid *Machiavel*; but *vis unita fortior eſt*, ſtrength united is ſtrong;) eſpecially having God's promiſe of a Conqueſt, as the *King of Babylon* had to conquer *Egypt*, in whoſe behalf God ſaith, [*I will put my Sword into his Hand*, and will ſtrengthen his Arms, but I will

break

break Pharaoh's Arms, and he ſhall *groan before him* with the *groanings* of a deadly *wounded man*,] Ezek. 30. 24. accordingly if we can but ſay, that the Lord hath put his Sword into our Hands, even the *Sword* of the *Spirit*, which is the *Word of God*, Epheſ. 6. 17. (wherewith our *Saviour* himſelf conquered *Satan* in all his three Aſſaults, *Matth.* 4. 4, 7, 10, ſaying, *Scriptum eſt*, it *is Written*, againſt them all) then the Devil will leave us, as he did our Lord, *ver.* 11. (at leaſt *for a Seaſon*, Luke 4, 13.) and *Angels came* to bring Food to him after his forty days faſting. Thus likewiſe if the Lord will ſtrengthen our Arms alſo (as well as put his Sword into our Hands,) yea and break the Arms of that *Great Dragon*, *Pharaoh*, as he is called, *Ezek.* 29.3. then ſhall he lie groaning before us, (as in the example aforeſaid) with the groanings of a deadly wounded man. According both to the Church's Prayer, [*awake*, *awake*, thou *Arm of the Lord*, art thou not *it* that *cut Rahab* in *pieces*, and *wounded the Dragon*; Oh put on *ſtrength* as in the *days of old*,] Iſai. 51. 9. and 27. 1. and according alſo to God's promiſe, [*thou ſhalt tread upon the Lion* and the *Adder*, the *young Lion* and the *Dragon* ſhalt thou *trample under Foot*,] Pſal. 91. 13. *becauſe*

he

he hath ſet his love upon me, therefore will I deliver him, &c. ver. 14. yea and according to *Chriſt*'s promiſe likewiſe; [They *ſhall take up Serpents*, and if *they drink* any *deadly Poiſon*, it ſhall not *hurt them*,&c.] Mark 16.17,18. *NB. Note well*, This extraordinary Gift laſted until *Chriſt* was publickly profeſſed in the World: Indeed this *great Red Dragon* will be wrongful to the *Woman*, (the *Church*) and to her *Seed*, Rev. 12.3,4,7,9,16,17. until our Lord come and lay hold on him, and chain him up, *&c. Rev.* 20. 2, 3. and *tread down Satan under our Feet ſhortly*, Rom. 16. 20. In the mean time we muſt endeavour to ſay with *David*, even three times over, [tho' our Spiritual Enemies be as *many* as are all the *Nations* which compaſs us about, (even the *Philiſtins*, *Ammon*, and *Amaleck*, &c.) yet in the *Name of the Lord* we will deſtroy them; yea tho' they be ſo *numerous* as to *compaſs* us *about*; yea and again, they compaſs us round about, yet in the *Name of the Lord* we will deſtroy them: yet higher, tho' they compaſs us about like a ſwarm of Bees that carry poiſonful Stings with them, which in revenge they will loſe, and oft their very lives together, or at leaſt become Drones ever after; (juſt ſo do Satan's Imps, who matter not, care not

not if they undo and damn themſelves for ever, ſo they may but ſpend their venemous Spight upon the poor Servants of God,) yet even of thoſe alſo, we muſt ſay on with *David*, that in the *Name* of the *Lord* we will *deſtroy them*, even *three times* over, *Pſal.* 118. 10, 11, 12. and that with *David*'s faith likewiſe, who ſaith before his Victory over them; [they *are already quenched* as the *fire of Thorns*,] ver. 12. alluding to what he had before ſaid of his *Enemies*, [*before your Pots can feel the Thorns*, he ſhall *take them away as with a Whirlwind*, both *living*, and in *his wrath*,] Pſal. 58. 9. This is here a *Compariſon* taken from *Raw-fleſh*, which is pulled out of the Pot, before it hath felt the full force of the Fire; God's wrath ſhall ſweep them away, when they ſeem to be moſt vigorous and vivacious to look upon; *David* foreſaw their ſudden deſtruction: Oh that it were ſo with us, as it was with *David*, whoſe *Faith* was above his *Fear*; and Oh that we could foreſee the Fall of our *Spiritual Enemies*, as he did his *Temporal*, as it infallibly will be ſo, if the *Seed of God* be but really in us. Oh, what a ſhame it is, that a Pagan Dame *Zereſh* could foreſee the future Fall of her haughty Husband *Haman*, ſaying, [*If Mordecai*

be

e of the Seed of the Jews, before whom thou haſt begun to fall, thou *ſhalt not prevail againſt him,* but *ſhalt ſurely fall before him,*] Eſth. 6. 13. the Hebrew is, [*falling* thou *ſhalt fall,*] that is, irrecoverably: This ſhe ſpake like a prudent Woman, that had obſerved how the *Jews* were noted for a Nation which was very dear to God, and which was oftentimes by an high hand delivered by him from their Enemies, as from *Pharaoh*, &c. poſſibly the Devil might put this Prophecy into her Mouth, (as *Satan* in the ſimilitude of *Samuel* had long before preached *Saul*'s Funeral Sermon, 1 *Sam.* 28. from ver. 16, to 20.) However ſhe told *Haman* the truth, tho' it might come from the old Lyar the Devil, yet was it for Deviliſh ends; for as ſhe had been a bad Counſellor to her Husband heretofore; ſo now ſhe becomes a moſt ſad and cold Comforter to him. If this poor *Pagan* could argue thus aright from humane prudence, how much more may true *Chriſtians*, who learn better Leſſons in *Chriſt's School*, Epheſ. 4. 20. where we are taught to believe, that [*whoſoever is born of God, doth not commit ſin,* for the *Seed of God remaineth in him,* and he *cannot ſin,* becauſe *he is born of God,*] 1 John 3. 9. Ἁμαρτίαν οὐ ποιεῖ, that is, he dare not *drive*

the

the Trade of Sin, the *Seed* will bring forth Fruit like it ſelf, ſo far as he is made a *partaker* of the *Divine Nature*, 2 Pet. 1. 4. He cannot ſin *ſinningly*, ſo as to be transformed into the image of ſin; he cannot *do wickedly with both hands earneſtly*, Mic. 7. 3. he is not *paſt feeling* to *work all uncleanneſs with greedineſs*, for he hath not ſo learned *Chriſt*, Epheſ. 4. 19, 20. Sin cannot carry it away without ſome Counter-Buffs. So 'tis farther ſaid, [*We know that whoſoever is born of God, ſinneth not*; (to wit, that *ſin unto Death*, the unpardonable ſin; no not other ſins, as other Sinners that are the Slaves of Satan,) but *he keepeth himſelf* ſo, as that the *wicked one cannot touch him*, (that is, with any of his *deadly touches*: He cannot thruſt in his venemous Sting ſo far as to deſtroy the *Seed of God* in *him*, *that is begotten of God*, as he doth into the very Spirits of thoſe called the Serpents Seed, even the *World* that *lieth in wickedneſs*, 1 John. 5. 18, 19. with ver. 16. From whence we may argue, and upon better grounds than that *Pagan Dame*, before-named, did; that if the *Seed of God* be in us, if we be begotten and born of God, none of thoſe *Principalities* and *Powers* of Hell, nor any of thoſe *Rulers* of the *Darkneſs of this World*,

World, nor any *Spiritual Wickedneſs* in *high places*, (as the phraſe is, *Epheſ.* 6.12.) ſhall ever be able to prevail againſt us, but they ſhall ſurely fall before us. They may indeed ſometimes (in caſe of ſome Divine Deſertion) put us foully to the Foil, but they can never give us a *total* and a *final Fall*; for God ſo *puts his fear* into the hearts of his Covenanted People, that they *ſhall not depart from him*; but he will *cauſe them to fear him for ever*, Jer. 32. 39, 40, 41. for here lies the Riches of the Covenant of Grace, that tho' (for ſome glorious ends of unſearchable Divine Wiſdom) it ſometimes doth *permit a fall*, even in the choiceſt and chiefeſt of the Favourites of Heaven; yet it always doth *enſure Repentance after the Fall*, as it was in the caſe both of *David* and *Peter*; they both did *fall foully*, but neither of them did *fall finally*, they both got up again by the helping hand of their Heavenly Father: And this may be a little illuſtrated by the example aforenamed of *Mordecai* and *Haman*. If a *Jew* fall before a *Perſian*, (as *Mordecai* did before *Haman*,) yet may he get up again and prevail, as did *Mordecai* againſt *Haman*; but if a *Perſian* or any *Gentile* doth but begin to fall before a *Jew*, he ſhall not be able to ſtop from

falling down, nor to riſe up again, as did *Haman* before *Mordecai*; he did fall to the loweſt and utmoſt ebb of diſgrace and miſery; yea and tho' he was advanced on high upon the higheſt Gallows, (that we read or hear of) which he had erected for the *Jew Mordecai*, yet he did *moſt fatally fall* into the bottomleſs Pit of Hell alſo, to be an eternal Companion with proud *Lucifer*, and his faln Angels, *&c.* All this may afford matter of great encouragement to us in our Chriſtian Warfare, that the *Seed of God*, in us, will ſpring up gradually, (notwithſtanding the many bitter Blaſts of Hail and Snow that fall upon it) and will in due ſeaſon bring forth a moſt happy Harveſt, as *Pſal.* 126. 5, 6. but we muſt be careful to *war this good warfare*, 1 Tim. 1. 18. and *fight this good fight of Faith*, 1 Tim. 6. 12. both in *God's Arms*, (which makes our Bow to abide in ſtrength, *Gen.* 49. 24. and which ſtrengthens us with a kind of omnipotency in doing all things, *Phil.* 4. 13.) yea and in *God's Armour* alſo, *Epheſ.* 6. 12. to 19. whereby we may be able not only to *ſtand* our ground, but alſo to *quench all the fiery Darts of the Devil*; yea and if we *reſiſt* him *ſtedfaſt in the Faith*, we ſhall *put him to the flight*, and win the Day, and ſo wear the Crown of

Con-

querors, *Jam.* 4. 7. 1 *Pet.* 5. 8, 9. Let us all along observe the Apostle's Rule, [*Whatsoever we do in Word and Deed*, let all *be done in the Name of the Lord Jesus*,] Col. 3. 17. *David* acknowledges, it was by God's strength, and not by his own, *&c.* In all those fore-named places of the Psalms, and in 2 *Sam.* 22. 30, 33, 34, 35, 36, 37, *&c.* wherein he saith, [that *God was his strength*, and that *girded him with strength*, so to *rout the Ranks* of his *Enemies*, and so to *beat them down* that they *could never rise up any more*, &c.] and this was when he hurl'd (as it were) the force of God himself at the Face of great *Goliah*; he ascribes all the Glory both of his *Valour* and of his *Victory* unto *God's strength*, and not unto his own, *&c.*

The 4th *Character* of a Conqueror is, to take the Conquered captive, and to clap them up close Prisoners, as *Joshuah* did with his *five conquered Kings*, *shutting* them up in the Cave at *Makedah*, and rolling great Stones to the Mouth of the Cave, that they might be kept there *close Prisoners*, until the time of their execution, *Josh.* 10. 18. and when he brought them to be executed, he made his *Captains* to set their *Feet upon the Necks of those five Kings*, and then he *hanged*

them up upon *five Trees*, ver. 24, 26, &c. Even ſo our *Joſhuah*, or *Jeſus*, doth all thoſe Offices of Love for us, as that *Joſhuah* did for *Iſrael*; our Lord *aſcendeth up on high*, he *leadeth captivity Captive*, &c. Pſal. 68. 18. and Epheſ. 4. 8. and then he ſaith afterward, [as *for thoſe my Enemies*, that *would not have me to reign over them*, *bring them forth*, and *ſlay them before me*,] Luke 19. 27. This phraſe [of leading captivity captive] is an alluſion to the *Roman Conquerors*, who rode through the City, (*Rome*) up to the *Capitol* in their Triumphant Chariots, leading their *conquered* Captives all along, with their Hands bound behind them, to be diſpoſed of afterwards according to the pleaſure of the *Conqueror*, either to preſent Death, or to perpetual Impriſonment. Thus likewiſe our Lord, (who *rideth on Conquering*, and to *Conquer upon the white Horſe of the Goſpel*, Rev. 6. 2.) doth lead Captivity Captive, that is, thoſe *Spiritual Enemies* that formerly did captivate us: Our Lord doth now (through grace) captivate them, and they are principally *Three*, (which make up this Captivity,) that our Lord leads Captive for us:

The *Firſt* is the *Fleſh*, whereof *Paul* complaineth, that the *Law* of the *Members* did not only war againſt the *Law* of his

his *Mind*; but it also brought him into *Captivity* to the *Law of Sin*, and made him cry out, *Oh wretched man*, &c. yet did he look through this Black Cloud at *Christ* his *Deliverer*, Rom. 7. 23, 24, 25. as it is said, If *we be in Christ*, and he in us, then have we *crucified the Flesh, with the Affections* and *Lusts*, Gal. 5. 24. When *Christ* came into the World, it was our sins that *crucified Christ*; and so when *Christ* comes into our Hearts, he likewise *crucifies* our sinful Flesh in us; as the *body of sin* did *crucifie Christ*, so *Christ* doth *crucifie* the *body of sin:* Now to crucifie is not to kill outright at one blow, but it is to put to a long and lingering Death, no Member being free from pain; so if the *mortifying grace* of *Christ*, (which is the virtue and power of his Death, as an *holy Life* is the *virtue* and *power* of his *Resurrection*, Phil. 3. 10.) be in our Hearts by the *indwellings of Christ* there, *Ephes.* 3. 17. then the Body of Sin is nailed so fast, that it cannot stir either Hands or Feet, insomuch as it will certainly die, tho' it be not presently dead; yea tho' it suffer many sore throbs before it perfectly die: 'Tis like those Beasts in *Daniel*, [*whose Dominions* were *taken away*, yet *their Lives were prolonged for a Time and a Season*,] Dan. 7. 12. Now *Repen-*

tance is the *Nail*, that pierceth this Body of Sin; and the renewing of our Repentance doth put the Old Man in us to new Torments, till at last it die.

The *Second Enemy* (which *Christ* conquers and captivates in us, and for us) is the *World*, for he saith to us, [be of *good chear*, I *have overcome the World*,] John 16. 33. hence the *Apostle* useth the word [ὑπερνικῶμεν which signifies, we are more than Conquerors by *Christ's Love*,] Rom. 8. 37. because all our work that *Christ* hath left us to do, is only to conquer an Adversary which is already conquered to our hand, before hand: Just as *Joshuah* did to his Captains, he delivers the five conquered Kings to them, (as above) and they had no more to do, than to set their feet upon the Necks of the conquered; even so our *Jesus* hath *subdued our Iniquities*, Mic. 7. 19. and hath *overcome the World*, John 16. 33. already for us, so that we are made sure of Victory before hand, in our *head Christ*, Phil. 4. 13. and we now have need to do no more, but to trample all things under *our Feet*, (*where* the most wise God did at first *place them*, Psal. 8. 6, 7, 8.) and over which we should triumph in *Christ*, as the Apostle saith, [now *thanks be unto God, who causeth us always to triumph in*

in Christ,] 2 Cor. 2. 14. And indeed to be a *Triumpher*, is to be more than a *Conqueror*, for Conquering goeth before, and Triumphing always follows after; and such a Triumpher was this same Apostle, who saith, [*God forbid that I should glory, save in the Cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom the World is crucified unto me, and I unto the World*,] Gal. 6. 14. as if he had said, the World and I do well agree; as it careth not for me, so I care as little for *it*; I look upon it only as a dead thing, as an overgrown Dunghil; I love not to suck her two fair Breasts (or rather her two foul Botches) of Profit and Pleasure. He had learnt that high Lesson in *Christ's* School, of knowing both how to *abound* with *Humility*, and how to *want* with *content*, &c. Phil. 4. 12, 13. 'Tis said when the *World is set in our Hearts*, Eccles. 3. 11. (which ought to be *under our Feet*, as before;) when we are given up to the carking cares about things of this present evil World, (as it is called, *Gal.* 1. 4.) alas, how sick are some (called Saints) of this dry dropsie, *&c!* May we not well say, there is as yet no fitness that the Saints should rule the World, (according to the Notion of some Opinionists,) while the *World so much doth rule the Saints.* It

may be feared that it is no easie matter to find, among many Professors, any such mortified men as *Paul* was, and such a *Crucifix* of *Mortification*, who could cry Quits with the World, as before it is said. The Scripture indeed tells us, [*whosoever is born of God, overcometh the World*, and who *is he that overcometh the World, but he that believeth* that *Jesus is the Son of God*; and this is the *Victory* that *overcometh the World*, even *our Faith*,] 1 Joh. 5. 4, 5. This is not only because by our *faith in Christ*, we are assured of the Victory before we have accomplished our good fight of Faith; but also because it is the Nature of *Faith* to put the Soul upon *more noble Exploits*, as well as *Projects*, than those that are about the base things of this lower World: 'Tis said, that *Christ* hath made us *Kings* and *Priests unto God his Father*, Rev. 1. 6. which is called a *Royal Priesthood*, 1 Pet. 2. 9. So that this *faith in Christ* giveth the Soul such a *Royal Spirit*, as raiseth it above those things that are below, as worldly things are stiled, Col. 3. 1, 2. *If ye be risen with Christ, seek and set your affections upon things that are above, and not upon things that are below upon the Earth.* Faith lifts up the Soul above both the *frownings* and the *flatterings* of the World; when

when we are affrighted with the Frowns of the World, *Faith* preſents the Torments of Hell to us, which are far worſe than what the moſt frowning World can inflict upon us; and on the other hand, when we are allured and enticed with the Flatteries of the World, then *Faith* repreſents to us the Joys of Heaven, which do infinitely tranſcend all the glittering Glories of this ſublunary periſhing World; as *Scipio Africanus* ſaid, [*Vellem, ſi non eſſem Imperator,*] I would, were I not an Emperor; and *Themiſtocles* [take thou it up, for thou art not a *General*;] ſo it ſhould be below *Chriſtians*, &c. Yea, and *Faith* gives us not only a ſight and taſt of the *Grapes of Canaan*, the moſt lovely and deſirable Fruits thereof, but alſo feeds us with *Hidden Manna*, Rev. 2. 17. If we be but overcomers, as we paſs along through this Wilderneſs to our *Heavenly Canaan*: Thus *Moſes by Faith* deſpiſed the Treaſures and Pleaſures of *Egypt*, when he *choſe to ſuffer affliction with the People of God*, rather than to *enjoy the Pleaſures of Sin for a Seaſon*; *eſteeming the Reproach of Chriſt greater Riches than all the Treaſures of that Land*, (which had been the Granary of the World but a little before in *Joſeph's time*;) for he had *reſpect unto the Recompence of Reward*;

ward; and by the Eye of his Faith he *saw him that was invisible*, Heb. 11. 24, 25, 26, 27. that *whole Chapter* demonstrateth by numerous Instances, how *Faith* is a *World-conquering Grace*: And thus it was also with *Caleb* and *Joshuah*, who no sooner had tasted of the goodly Grapes of *Canaan*, but they presently loathed the *Garlick* and *Onions* of *Egypt*; they longed not at all after them, as the other *Murmurers* did, even the whole Multitude, *Numb.* 14. 6, 7, 8. saying, 'tis a *Land worth all our Hazards*, &c. How much more is *Heaven* worth all our *Hardships*! Thus our Lord saith, [the *Kingdom of Heaven suffers Violence*, and the *Violent take it by force*, Matth. 11. 12. Such a Violent and Valiant Conqueror was *Luther*, (as before) who when the *Pope* tempted him with a Cardinal's Cap, to take him off from promoting Reformation, he bravely answered [*Valde protestatus sum, me nolle sic a Deo satiari*, that is, my God shall not put me off with such petty things; for I breath after better, I am born to better things by my New Birth. And long before *Luther*, even *Origen* did make the same choice that *Moses* had made before him, in choosing rather to be a poor Preacher (or Catechist) in *Alexandria*, than he would deny the Faith and

and turn *Apostate*, as his fellow-pupil *Plotinus* did, to procure to himself the great Grandeur and Splendor of this World: As likewise I cannot but record it here, how the *Strengthening* power of Christ made my self able to do the like, *&c.* when the Duke of *York* had imprisoned me; and after a long time the *Duke of Buckingham* came to release me; he then did offer to me one of the fattest Benefices in the Church of *England*, if I would conform, for he was informed by my *Patron*, and his Father-in-law (the Lord *Fairfax*) that I was a great Scholar, and had knowledge in all the learned Languages, *&c.* as he was pleased to use these Phrases, and many more to the same purpose, adding, how much advantage might redound to our Church, (as well as to my self) might I but be one of them, *&c.* My Answer then was this, [*I thank your Grace* for your *Great Offers*, but I *could not buy my Repentance* at so *dear a rate*, *in wronging the Light of my own Conscience*; for I make it *my Exercise*, (*my Recreation*) to *keep it void of Offence* both *toward God*, and *toward Man*, Acts 24. 16. All the *Favour I request of your Grace* at this time, is only my Releasement from Prison,] at which the Lord so inclined his Heart to release me,

and

and that *without* putting any Bonds upon me, *&c.* Ever ſince that time my prayer hath been that of *Agur*, [*Lord, give me neither Poverty nor Riches*, but *feed me with Food convenient for me*, &c. as *Prov.* 30. 6, 7, 8. Indeed it is a ſhame the World ſhould captivate us, when we ſhould captivate the World.

The *Third Enemy* that *Chriſt* captivateth for us, is the *Devil* himſelf, who maketh uſe of our *fleſhly Luſts* as his Soldiers that he *preſſeth*, yea and preſſeth forward too to war *againſt our Souls*, 1 Pet. 2. 11. and this *preſent evil World*, Gal. 1. 4. is this *Tempter's large Shop*, where he is fully furniſhed with all ſorts of Tempting Tools; his *Bag* for the Covetous, his Bed for the Laſcivious, and his Board for the Luxurious, *Luſt of the Fleſh*, *Luſt of the Eyes*, *and Pride of Life*, as before. Now when this Stronger Man (our Lord Jeſus) comes upon this Strong Man thus armed, *Satan*, and overcomes him, *&c.* Luke 11. 22. he ſpoils him with all his Principalities and Powers, he *leads Captivity Captive*, Epheſ. 4. 8. and makes a ſhew of him openly, as *Tamerlane* did *Bajazet* the *Great Turk*, whom he ſhut up in an Iron Cage, made like a Grate, and formed in ſuch a ſort, as that on every ſide he might be ſeen,

and

and ſo carried him up and down to be ſcorned and derided by his own People as he paſſed along through all *Aſia*. Thus our Lord, and our Champion made the Devil a publick ſpectacle of ſcorn and deriſion, *triumphing over him in it*, Col. 2. 15. He hath already conquered him, *taken his Armour from him wherein this Strong Man truſted*; he hath won the Field, and hath trodden him under his own Feet before hand for us, and he will tread Satan *under our Feet ſhortly*, Rom. 16. 20. and he will give to us the ſame priviledge that *Joſhuah* did to his Captains, namely, to *ſet our Feet upon the Necks* of all our Spiritual Enemies, for this is God's doom upon all our Spoilers, that [*when they have done their ſpoiling-work*,] they *themſelves* ſhall be *ſpoiled*, Iſai. 33. 1. As *Satan* formerly took us alive [as ζωγρῶν] ſignifies, and *led us captive at his will*, 2 Tim. 2. 26. So he himſelf *ſhall be led captive*, as our Lord hath long ago promiſed, *Rev.* 13. 10. as if he had ſaid [be of good chear,] your Spiritual Adverſaries, (yea even *Antichriſt* himſelf) ſhall all meet with their match, as *Goliah* did with *David*, and this *Strong Man* with the *Stronger Man*; as they have been long *leading* you *into Captivity*, ſo they themſelves ſhall be *led into Captivity*,

they

they ſhall all Drink as they have Brewed; they ſhall have *Blood to drink*, for they *are worthy*, becauſe they have *ſucked the Blood of God's Saints*, Rev. 16. 6. *Talia quiſque luat, qualia quiſque facit*, God will pay them home in their own Coins. [It is a *righteous thing with God*, to *recompence Tribulation to them that trouble us*,] 2 Theſ. 1. 6. to *fill them with* the *evil of their own ways*, as Prov. 14. 14. and God will trouble thoſe Troublers of *Iſrael*, yea and that to all Eternity, becauſe if they and we could live together, they would trouble us for ever in this lower World. Now this is the bleſſed priviledge of every New Creature, whereas *ſin* and *Satan* did formerly lord it over the Soul, the Soul by this happy change becomes (through Grace) to lord it over *ſin* and *Satan*, and then it is, that the Lord ſaith to us, as he ſaid by the Mouth of *Moſes* unto *Iſrael*, [Thoſe *Egyptians*, that *purſue* you *thus this day*, ye *ſhall ſee them again* no *more* for *ever*, Exod. 14. 13. unleſs it be as they lay dead upon the ſhoar. Thus converting Grace gives a mortal Wound to the Body of Sin, and cauſeth it to lie a dying ever after; and how can ſuch as are *dead* (or at leaſt dying) to ſin, *live any longer therein*, and *continue in it*! Rom. 6. 1, 2. Oh that we may be-

able

able to say (our *Consciences bearing witness in the Holy Ghost*, Rom. 9. 1. that *Christ in us hath led Captivity captive for us*, &c.

The *Fifth Character* of a Conqueror is, to pull down the *Strong Holds* of the Conquered: He will in no wise suffer those noisom Nests of Rebellion to be kept standing any longer, but with all expedition he labours to demolish them, to pull them down from Top to Bottom, and to leave them all level with the ground. We ought all of us to make a most strict scrutiny, and a most serious enquiry, whether this *Stronger Man*, (the *Captain of our Salvation*, Heb. 2. 10.) hath *made* the *Weapons* of our *Spiritual Warfare* even strong enough and *mighty through God*, for the *pulling down* of the *Strong Holds of Satan* in us, *and casting down all vain imaginations*, and every *high thing* that *exalteth it self against the Knowledge of God*; yea and *bringing into Captivity* every *thought to the obedience of Christ in us*,] 2 Cor. 10. 4, 5.

NB. Note well here, (*1st*) The *Apostle*'s modesty, not we (saith he) but our Weapons are mighty, and not through us that wield them, but 'tis through God that works in and by them; 'tis not I, saith he, but the grace of God in me, 1 Cor. 15. 10.

(*2dly*)

(2*dly*) The *Strong Holds of Satan* in us are many; 'tis in the plural number; there be ſundry ſtrong Forts, Caſtles, Trenches, Bulwarks, all *Cages* of *Unclean Beaſts*, inhabiting in our Hearts; we have naturally in us a whole Legion of Domeſtick Devils, as the *Man in the Goſpel* had, Mar. 5. 2, 9. We are top-full of evil Imaginations, of carnal Reaſonings, and wholly *filled with all unrighteouſneſs*, Rom. 1. 29. ſo that [*quiſque ſibi Satan eſt*] every Man becomes a tempting Devil to himſelf, and is *drawn away of his own Luſt, and enticed*, Jam. 1. 14, 15. Satan hath only a *perſuading ſlight*, but not any *enforcing might*; 'tis our own carnal Concupiſcence that carries the chiefeſt ſtroke in all our ſins, which indeed is a compound of many Fleſhly Luſts, that all war againſt our Souls, 1 *Pet.* 2. 11. as we read of *Joſhuah*, how he conquered *one and thirty Kings* of the curſed *Canaanites*, *houghing all their Horſes, and burning all their Chariots* with fire (as before) yea, and thoſe *Kings of Canaan* are named one by one, *Joſh.* 12. 9, to 24. And as we alſo read of *David*, how one Gyant after another did fall by his hands, *Goliah* one, *Jeſhbibenob* one, *Sippii* one, *Lahmi* one, and then that Monſter of Mankind is mentioned, who was a double Monſter,

Monſter, both in his Stature, and in the number of his Fingers and Toes, having upon each Hands and Feet a Finger and a Toe more than ordinary, *twenty four in all*; yet *all thoſe monſtrous Gyants* fell by the *Hands* of *David*, and by the Hands of his Servants, 1 *Chron.* 20. 4, 6, 8. Thus the ſame may be ſaid ſo of thoſe Souls upon whom *Chriſt* (this *Stronger Man*) hath made a Conqueſt, and reſides there as a Conqueror; that Soul may reckon up (one by one) all the conquered Tyrants who have ruled over it formerly with rigour. As,

(*1ſt*) With *Joſhuah*, *Pride*, and its King, one; *Paſſion*, and its King, one; *Concupiſcence*, and its King, one; *Covetouſneſs*, and its King, one; *Unbelief*, and its King, one; *Hypocriſie*, and its King, one; and ſo on forward, until the ſame number amount up to the number of *one and thirty*, as in *Joſh.* 12. 9, to 24. and ſo likewiſe the Soul may,

(*2dly*) Reckon with *David*, many monſtrous Temptations have been conquered by *Chriſt* in me the *hope of Glory*, Col. 1. 27. I have had monſtrous Temptations to *Atheiſm*, to *Blaſphemy*, to *Self-murder*, to *Filthy Uncleanneſs*, and to many more ſuch *Abominations*, &c. as 1 *Chron.* 20. 4, to 8. But now bleſſed be the Free

Grace of God toward me, my ſpiritual *Joſhua*, my ſpiritual *David*, even my *dear Redeemer*, the *Lord*, *ſtrong* and *mighty*, the *Lord mighty* in *Battle*, Pſal. 24. 8. that *Elſhaddai*, (which *Abenezra* reads, that *Conqueror*) the *King of Glory*, even *he* hath conquered and captivated all thoſe monſtrous Tyrants and Tempters; *he* hath pulled down alſo their Strong Holds in me, and for me: And tho' as ſome *Caſtles* (wherein the Enemy ſeated themſelves in our late *Civil Uncivil Wars*) proved ſo ſtrong, that a double Difficulty did attend them. For,

(1ſt) It was a Work of great Difficulty to conquer thoſe ſo ſtrongly fortified Forts; they ſtood it out many a long Siege, and coſt the Lives of many brave Soldiers, yet at the laſt were taken by the beſieging Commander: And then, when publick Authority commanded that thoſe Receptacles of Rebellion muſt be demoliſhed, and raced down to the very Foundation. Then,

(2dly) Appeared another Difficulty in *pulling them down*; it was found the Stones were ſo ſtrongly cemented together, that they did abide many a luſty Blow, and they did bear many a ſtrong Stroke, yea much Time, Coſt and Pains were ſpent, yet all would not do, no not any Undermining of

of the Walls, until at the last the whole Fabrick was blown up with many Barrels of Gun-powder, prudently lodged in the very Bowels of them; and all this little enough to level them *even* with the ground; for we have a plain prospect of the Scars of those *Castles* still remaining unto this day; even so it is with the *Strong Holds of Satan* in us: As 'tis a Work of great Difficulty to overcome them; so 'tis no less to level them, and quite to bring them down to an utter demolishment, some Scars will still remain in us. Wherefore how ought we to *double* our *Diligence* in that most *Necessary*, yet much *Neglected Duty* of Self-examination! the *Apostle* useth a double Spur to stir us up unto a serious Self-trial, saying, [πειράζετε δοκιμάζετε] *prove your selves*, and *try your selves*, as the *Goldsmith* does his *Coin*, or the *Lapidary* his *Stones* upon a *lydius lapis*, or Touch-stone, to discover them from such as be counterfeit. The sineal Trial of our Eternal Estate doth indeed belong immediately solely to the *Court* of *Heaven*, but the discerning of our sincerity and singleness of Soul God-ward, appertain to the *Court* of our own *Consciences* for our own comfort; for if our *own Hearts condemn us*, *God is greater than our Hearts*, and

will condemn us much more, &c. 1 John 3. 20, 21. As the *Deciſive part* belongs to *God*, ſo the *Diſquiſitive part* belongs to us: Therefore it is added, [*know ye not*, that *Chriſt is in you except ye be Reprobates*,] 2 Cor. 13. 5. which follows that of the ſame *Apoſtle* [about the *pulling down* of the *Strong Holds of Satan*, &c. 2 Cor. 10. 4, 5. through the *indwelling* of *Chriſt*. This is ſo needful a Duty, that the Precept is double, *Zeph.* 2. 1. Gather up your ſelves, gather up your thoughts, *excutite vos, iterum excutite*, (as *Tremellius* renders it, ſhake your ſelves, and better ſhake your ſelves in Self-examination; the *omiſſion* whereof, as it is much *eaſie*, ſo it is moſt *dangerous*. How happy are ſuch Souls, who can ſay in the witneſſings of the Holy Ghoſt, that this *Stronger Man* hath raiſed Batteries, and ſprung ſeveral Mines againſt the *Strong Holds of Satan* in them, that the Lord hath battered the Walls thereof with his Battering Rams, and with his *Great Cannon* of a *Soul-ſearching Miniſtry*, and with his *Spirit of Burning* (ſo called, *Iſai.* 4. 4. becauſe it burns up the combuſtible matter of our Corruptions, refining our Droſs, and kindling up *Repentance unto Life*, &c.) and that *Chriſt* hath been luſtily hammering the Sides

and

and Corners of those *Strong Holds*, with the great *Hammer* of his *Word*, and with the strong Hand of his Spirit; thus saith the Lord, [*Is not my word* like as *a Fire*, and *like an Hammer* that *breaketh* the *Rock in pieces*,] Jer. 23. 29. the *Workman's Hammer*, which *Jael* took in her Right Hand to nail great *Sisera* fast to the ground, *Judg.* 4. 21. and 5. 26. was a fair resemblance of this mighty Work of the Right Hand of the Almighty God upon this *Strong Man Satan*. All such Souls (I say) who can truly experience those effectual operations of an *indwelling Christ* in them, must not be discouraged, although they find and feel this work of *Mortification*, or putting to Death (as the word Θανατοῦτε signifies, *Rom.* 8. 13.) to be an hard and tedious Work; and although after the Walls, be in part demolished, yet some Relicks will remain, and much Rubbish we meet with to be removed, (for we may say with *Joshuah*, that we are not yet cleansed from the iniquity of *Baal-peor*, that *Idol of opening*, in lustful Contemplations, and Heart-adulteries, *Matth.* 5. 28. *even unto this very day*, Josh. 22. 17.) notwithstanding all these difficulties, yet may we be well assured that the *Strong Tower* of *Babel* in us, shall in due time tumble down, *&c.* for *all the*

Works of God are *perfect Works*, Deut. 32. 4. That work which the *Lord begins* he will *certainly finish*, Phil. 1. 6. He will not leave his Work done to half part only, and so to be carried on to perfection by some other hand, &c. for our Lord doth *save to the utmost all that come to God by him*, Heb. 7. 25. The *Angel* of the *Covenant* will *redeem* us, as he did our Father *Jacob*, *from all evil*, Gen. 48. 16. and deliver our Souls, as he did *David's out of all adversity*, 2 Sam. 4. 9. and the Lord that *stood* with *Paul*, *strengthned him*, and *delivered him out of the Mouth of the Lion*, and (as he saith) shall *deliver me* farther *from every evil work*, 2 Tim. 4. 17, 18. This is great encouragement to us, if indeed we be seriously at the work of battering down the Walls of *Satan's Strong Holds in us*; and in order of doing this the more effectually we must place our Souls under the most powerful Ministry, so that every *Sabbath* and every *Sermon* may promote, in some measure, the battering down of its Walls. If those *two Brethren* in *Iniquity* did dig down the Wall of *Shechem's House* with a *wicked Mind* for denling their Sister, *Gen.* 49. 6. How much more ought we with a *godly Mind* to be digging down the Walls of the *Strong Holds* of *Satan* wh

who hath defiled, and is ſtill in defiling our precious Souls, ſo as to *damn* them for ever. From the *Hiſtory* of the Walls of *Jericho* we may learn this Divine Leſſon, or this *Myſtery* of *Godlineſs*, as *Joſhua* did compaſs round about *Jericho* with the Ark of God, and his Conquering Army, the compleat time of *ſix days*, every day once; yet the Walls did not fall all that time, tho' they might be ſhattered, and put into a trembling poſture, and ſeverely ſhaken, while this was in doing; but upon the *ſeventh*, or *Sabbath-day*, they then did compaſs it *ſeven times*, as before they had compaſſed it but once every ſix days, *Joſh.* 6. 2, 3, 4. and then it was, that together with the Prieſts blowing of the Trumpets, and the loud Shoutings of the People, that the *Walls of Jericho fell flat to the ground*, ſo that the People round about went up into the City, every Man ſtraight before him, and took the City, *ver.* 5, and 20. and all this is ſaid to be effected by Faith, [*by Faith the Walls of Jericho fell, after it had been compaſſed ſeven days*,] Heb. 11. 30. So after the ſame manner may the Walls of our *Myſtical* accurſed *Jericho* within us, fall: If the *Ark of God's Preſence* be with us, and we paſs all along before it, as they did, *Joſh.* 6. 8.

and if we ſpend our time in Spiritual Meditation, and not make any Noiſe with our Voices, until our bleſſed *Joſhuah* bid us Shout, as it was there, *ver.* 10. and if the Prieſts blowing the Trumpets of Rams Horns, keep *going on continually* with us, as *ver.* 13. which ſheweth, how there muſt be the *grace* of *perſeverance*; we muſt hold up, hold on, and hold out to the end; and the nearer we draw to our long Home, then ought we to be much more labouring for a compleat Conqueſt, as it was in *Iſraels* caſe there. Their toil and travel was not greatly troubleſome in their compaſſing *Jericho*, but once at a time in all the *ſix days*; but upon the *ſeventh* day, they had the Task of compaſſing the City ſeven times, one immediately after another, and therefore it is ſaid [that they roſe up early at the dawning of that day,] *ver.* 25. even ſo ought we to lay out our continual endeavours to pull down the Walls of the *Strong Holds of Satan*, even all the *ſix days* of our Lives; yet ſhall we not find this demoliſhing work perfectly effected, until the *evening* of our *eternal Sabbath*. Whence we learn likewiſe, that as upon every *Sabbath-day* we ſhould take ſeven times more pains for the *mortifying of ſin*, and for the *fortifying of grace*, than we do upon

upon all the *ſix days* of the Week, *&c.* So when our laſt *Sabbath* approacheth, we ſhould ſtir up our ſelves to the utmoſt of our ability, that we may then *work out our Salvation with fear and trembling*, Phil. 2. 12. that we *may make our Calling and Election ſure*, 2 Pet. 1. 10. and that we may make ſure work for a better World, before we go hence to be ſeen no more, *&c.* All this muſt be done by *Faith* alſo, then down goes our *Jericho*. Then our Lord *Chriſt* will ſay of us, as he ſaid of his Golden Church at *Thyatira*, [I know thy Works, that thy laſt be better than thy firſt,] *Rev.* 2. 19. Tho' our *beginning* was but *ſmall*, yet our *latter end* ſhould *greatly encreaſe*, Job 8. 7. Our laſt days ſhould be our beſt days in our earneſt purſuit for Heaven. As the Stone deſcending from an high Tower, the nearer it approaches to its center, the faſter it flies and falls; ſo the nearer we come to the end of our Race, we ought to run with the greater ſpeed, that *no Man*, *no Devil*, *no Thing*, *may take our Crown* from us; which is promiſed only to thoſe *that overcome*, Rev. 3. 11. 12. For as old *David* literally ſpake to his Captains, [*whoſoever* getteth up into the Gutter, and ſmiteth the *Jebuſites*, and the Blind and the Lame (Idols) the *hatred*

of

of David's Soul, he ſhall be my *General*, &c.] 2 Sam. 5. 8. This Royal Motion *Joab* embraceth, (that he might recover the King's Favour which he had loſt by his barbarous Murdering of brave *Abner*,) 1 Chron. 11. 6. and he *conquered* the City out of the hands of the curſed *Jebuſites*, which was after called *Sion*, and the *City of David*. So our *David* Myſtical maketh a more Royal Motion to us, ſaying, [*To him that overcometh, will I grant to ſit with me in my Throne*, even as I *alſo overcame*, and *am ſet down with my Father in his Throne*,] Rev. 3. 21. in which place [ὡς] for [ὅτι,] that is, [even as] for [becauſe,] ſo the ſenſe is, [becauſe I alſo overcame;] therefore is it from *Chriſt's love to us* that we are made to over, overcome, (as ὑπερνικάω ſignifies,) *Rom.* 8. 37. it was his helping hand that made *David* able to *run through a Troop*, and to *leap over the Wall*, Pſal. 18. 29, 34. as before. And here is a greater Reward promiſed than *Joab's Generalſhip*, which ſoon periſhed with himſelf. But here is a *Crown* (with this Inſcription upon it) [*Vincenti dabo*] to him that overcometh will I give it, *Rev.* 2. 10. and 6. 2. and not only to wear a Crown among Royal Heads, but alſo to ſit upon Thrones above all Chairs of State.

There-

Therefore it moſt highly concerns us to enquire, whether (with *Joab*) we have *ſcaled the Walls* of the *Strong Holds* of *Satan*, whether we have *gained the Gutter*, which is done when we are bleſt with an *hearing Ear* to the word of Life; for the *Ear* is (as it were) the *Gutter* that conveys even the Waters of Life into the Soul of Man; for thus it is ſaid, [*Hear and your Souls ſhall live*] Iſai. 55. 3. and [*Faith cometh by Hearing the Word of God,*] Rom. 10. 17. We muſt enquire likewiſe, whether (with *Joab* alſo) we have ſmitten thoſe curſed *Canaanites* (the *Jebuſites*) namely our own *Carnal Corruptions*; enquire (I ſay) *what Rule* we have *obtained over our own Spirits*; [he *that is ſlow to anger, is better than the Mighty*; and he that *ruleth his Spirit*, is *more honourable than he that conquereth a City,*] Prov. 16. 32. This is not only Manly, but Godly alſo: Whereas he that *hath no Rule* over his *own Spirit*, is like a *City* that is *broken down* and *without Walls*, Prov. 25. 28. Such perſons are like *ſecure Hazor*, that had neither *Gates* nor *Bars*, Jer. 49. 31. thoſe Souls are not fenced in with the fear of God; and the *Strong Man Satan*, well armed, and furniſhed for every evil Work, (as the *Man of God* is furniſhed for every good Work,

as

as before, 2 *Tim.* 3. 17.) keeps ſtill the *poſſeſſion* of his *Strong Hold* in them, and they were never yet bleſt with a Viſit from that bleſſed *Stronger Man*, (the *Lord Jeſus*) to *diſpoſſeſs him.* Oh thrice happy are they, to whom *Chriſt* ſaith (as he did to that *Demoniack*, Mark 9. 25.) [*Come out of the* Man, thou *Unclean Spirit*, and *enter no more into him.*] As none by the *Roman Law* were allowed to have the honour of riding Triumphantly in the City of *Rome*, until he had obtained *five Victories* in the Field over his Enemies, *&c.* So none of us can ever expect to triumph as Conquerors in Heaven, unleſs we have got the Victory over all our *five Senſes*; for even all the *Members* of our *Bodies*, as well as all the Faculties of our Souls, muſt be reſcued from *Satan*, and brought *into obedience to Chriſt*, 2 Cor. 10. 5.

The *Sixth Character* of a Conqueror is, *Wholly* to *diſarm* the *Conquered.* Thus the *Stronger Man*, when he had *come upon the Strong Man*, and had overcome him, he *took away all his Armour wherein he truſted*, Luke 11. 22. that is, thoſe that were his offenſive Weapons, to wit, the *World*, *Sin* and *Death*, wherewith he hath prevailed over all the Sons and Daughters of faln *Adam*, (after he had foil'd *Adam* himſelf) for ſome thouſands of Years un-

to

to this day. And *Satan*, finding all theſe Weapons ſo ſucceſsful, is ſaid to *truſt in them*, as *Goliah* did in his *Armour*, which made him triumph *before his Victory*, ſaying to *David*, [come, and I will give thy Fleſh to the Fowls of the Air, and to the Beaſts of the Field,] 1 *Sam.* 17.44. as if *David* had been ſome Boy, to be frighted with his big Boaſts of his Carnal Confidence: and in *ver.* 45. *David* tells us how *Goliah* truſted in his Armour, ſaying to him, [thou comeſt unto me with a Sword and Spear, *&c.*] that is, thou truſteſt in thy own Strength, and in thy Armour, *&c.* [but I come to thee in the Name of the Lord, *&c.* who will *deliver thee this day into my hand*,] ver. 46,47. which was accordingly accompliſhed. Thus *he* who is call'd both *David's Son*, and *David's Lord*, Mat. 22. 45. The *Stronger Man* encounters the *Strong Man*, that *truſts in his Armour*, *and ſpoils him thereof*, Col. 2. 15. even in a *Duel* too as *David* did *Goliah*; for *Chriſt trod the Winepreſs alone*, Iſai. 63. 1, 2, 3. When the *fulneſs of time came*, this *ruddy David* appeared with his *Garments dyed Red* with the Blood of his Enemies; and as *David* put *Goliah's Armour in his Tent*, 1 Sam. 17. 54. ſo our *David* hath buried all the Damning Power of the Devil's Ar-

Armour in his own Grave, *Rom.* 6. 4. *Col.* 2. 12. Thus this *Alligory* may be farther enlarged, as *David* carried the Head of *Goliah* to *Jeruſalem*, and (as ſome ſuppoſe) ſet it up upon a Pinacle of the Temple, (where *Satan* ſet our Saviour by God's permiſſion afterwards) as an high Monument of his Happy Victory: This *David* did, after he had ſhewed this ſame Head to *Saul*, ver. 57. And as for *Goliah's Sword* (wherewith *David* had beheaded the Gyant with his own Weapon,) this likewiſe was laid up in the *Tabernacle, wrapped in a Cloath behind the Ephod*, 1 Sam. 21. 9. where we are told, how *David* prevailed with the High Prieſt *Abimeleck* to reſtore it to him again, as before it had been his own, won by his Valour, and therefore he accounted *no other Sword like that*, which would be a ſtanding Remembrancer of his former Atchievements by the mighty preſence of the Lord his God, wherewith he did encourage himſelf in the day of his great Diſtreſs, 1 *Sam.* 30. 6. even ſo our *Myſtical David deſtroyed him who had the power of Death*, that is, *the Devil*, with his own Weapon, *Heb.* 2. 14. *Chriſt's Death* was the *Death of Death*, and of the *Devil* alſo, who had the power of it; *Chriſt came to this end*, that he might *deſtroy*

the

the works of the Devil, 1 John. 3. 8. Accordingly, Oh how happy are those Christians, who, (through *Christ that strengthens them*) have got the head of the Tempter, or of some strong Temptation into their Hand, as *David* had the Head of *Goliah* in his Hand,) and can shew it to the King of Kings, as he did to the King of *Israel*, as before; and who have got also those [ὅπλα τῆς ἀδικίας] *Weapons* of *Wickedness* (as the Greek word signifies, *Rom.* 6. 13.) which formerly *warr'd against their Souls*, 1 Pet. 2. 11. But now are wrapped up in a Cloth behind the Ephod in the Tabernacle of the Lord; and who likewise go (with *David*) to the *High Priest* of *our Profession*, (as *Christ* is called, *Heb.* 3. 1.) and have got a better Sword of him, than that of *Goliah*, even the *Sword of the Spirit*, which it the *Word* of God, *Ephes.* 6. 17. of which it may be better said, than was said of the other, [*there is none like that*;] for if the word of *Christ* do but *dwell richly in us*, as it ought to do in *all wisdom*, Col. 3. 16. and as it did in *Christ* himself, (*æque* equally for *Quality*, *non equaliter*, not equally for *Quantity*;) for then we may comfortably hope, that with this *Sword* we shall conquer the great *Goliah* of Hell, as our Lord did only by hurling

hurling three ſmooth Stones of Sacred Scriptures at his Head, as *David* did at the Head of *Goliah*, and gave him his mortal wound. Then indeed are we *Conquerors* in *Chriſt*, and then may we ſay with *David* alſo, [the *Snare is broken*, and our *Souls are delivered*,] Pſal. 124.7. We ſhould be careful to keep all our Monuments and Remembrancers of our former Conqueſts over both *Satan's Temptations*, and of our own *Carnal Corruptions*, as wrapped up in a Napkin behind the Ephod of a *Sanctified Memory*, even in everlaſting Remembrances; then *former experience* may *ſtrengthen our preſent Faith*, Pſal. 77. 10, 11. and then no *Weapon formed againſt us* can *ever proſper*, as the Lord hath promiſed, *Iſai.* 54. 17.

The *Seventh Character* of a *Conqueror* is, to *put his Laws upon the Conquered* according to his will and pleaſure; as *Jehoſhaphat* and *Jehoram* did by the aſſiſtance of *Eliſha*, who ſaid to them, [*this is but a light thing with the Lord (to give you Water in your want,)* but he will deliver *the Moabites into your hands*,] 2 Kings 3. 17, 18. [but ye ſhall *ſmite* every fenced *City*, and ſhall *fell* every *good Tree*, and *ſtop all Wells* of Water, and mar (Hebr. *grieve*) *every good piece of Land with Stones*,] (as if it were a grief

to

to any good Soil to become useless and unfruitful,) *ver.* 19. all this was done to *Moab*, ver. 24, 25. Thus also if we be *Conquerors*, we must endeavour to batter down all the *strong holds of Satan* in us with Sling-stones, (as was the custom of that time, which is now done by mighty Bullets out of the Mouths of great Cannons.) The Slingers went about *Kirhareseth*, and broke down only the Towers of it; this was the will and pleasure of the Conqueror, not quite to demolish the Walls of it, as he did the other Cities: It were well if we could sling such smooth Stones (as *David* did at *Goliah*'s Head) especially such of the Holy Scriptures as our Mistical *David* did at the *Devils Head*, Matth. 4. 3, 7, 10. So ought we to sling such Stones at the Tempter, that we may knock down the Turrets of Pride and Presumption, *&c.* which *Glory* is *our Shame*, Phil. 3. 19. This we must do at the least, tho' we cannot quite demolish the Walls and Foundation. Oh that we could go thus far, and Oh that we could (with those *Conquerors* of *Israel*,) cut down every tall Tree, (which are of the *Devil's planting* and *watering*) that bring forth only wild and sower Grapes, paltry Hedge-fruit, as Crabs and such Trash in us; and Oh that we could *mar* (or grieve

every piece of (*Terra Diaboli*) the *Devil's Land* in us, (as one part of *America* is called) which bears no Fruit, but the *unfruitful works of Darkneſs*, ſo called *Epheſ.* 5. 11. And Oh that it were a grief to us (as before) to become uſeleſs and unfruitful in our Places and Stations; Oh that we could *mar* or *grieve* every *inordinate Affection* in us, which do *mar* or *grieve* our *pretious Souls*: Yet farther, Oh that we could likewiſe *ſtop up every Well of Water*, namely, all thoſe filthy Iſſues of Sin, which nothing can heal us of, ſave only a believing Touch of our dear *Lord Jeſus*, Matth. 9. 20. And yet a little higher, Oh that we could *ſow* thoſe Lands (we have already conquered out of the hand of the *Strong Man*, by the helping hand of the *Stronger Man*, our pretious Redeemer, our *Goel*) with no other thing but *Salt* as *Abimelech* did, *Judg.* 9. 45. the *City of Sechem*, which he not only pulled down, but he alſo *ſowed it with Salt*, as a token of its utter extirpation. This was the cuſtom of Conquerors which they uſed againſt Cities of greateſt provocation and affronts to them, becauſe *Salt* is taken in Scripture, not only for a *Sign*, but alſo for a *Cauſe* of Barrenneſs, *Gen.* 19. 26. *Deut.* 29. 23. *Judg.* 9. 45. *Pſal.* 107. 34. and *Zeph.* 2. 9. for *Salt*

Salt made the Land in those hot and dry Countries utterly barren and desolate when it was sown upon it; as nothing but Nettles and Salt-pits were found in *Moab*, when it was devoted to perpetual Desolation. And thus it is with all Spiritual Conquerors, (through *Christ's love to them*, and *his strength in them*;) they pray to the Lord that all their fleshly Lusts, (which *war against their Souls*, 1 Pet. 2. 11.) may even every one, the best beloved of them may be *put to death*, (as the word Θανατόω, *Rom.* 8. 13. signifies.) In order hereunto, when those Spiritual Enemies have received their Mortal Wound, whereof they must die, tho' it be of a long lingering death, (like those People that die of Consumptions;) and this Deadly Wound is always given to them at our first Conversion; yet all along (if we be right Conquerors in *Christ*) we must still pray to the Lord, that the Deadly Wound (then given) may never be healed any more, as that was which the *Apocaliptick Beast* had gotten, and was healed again, *Rev.* 13. 3. Our earnest Petition to the Lord must be, that he may put the same *Curse* upon our Lusts, which he put upon the fruitless *Fig-tree*, saying, [*Let no Fruit grow on thee henceforward for ever*, and immediately the *Fig-tree*

withered away,] Matth. 21. 19. at which his Diſciples marvelled, *&c. ver.* 20. Accordingly we ſhould deſire an everlaſting Barrenneſs may come upon thoſe *wild Olive Trees* (our fleſhly Luſts ſo called, *Rom.* 11. 24.) *wild by Nature*, yea and upon that *Root* of *Bitterneſs*, (to wit, *original Concupiſcence*) which *ſpringeth up* (too too often) to *trouble us*, Heb. 12. 15. We muſt beg hard of the Lord, that all theſe ſinful Soils may be *ſowed with Salt*, even to a perpetual Deſtruction, that we may learn (in *Chriſt's* School) to *deny all Ungodlineſs and worldly Luſts*, (which is the *negative part* of a *Chriſtian*,) and likewiſe to *live ſoberly* (as to our ſelves,) *juſtly*, (as to all men) and *holily* (as to the great God) in this *preſent World*, Tit. 2. 12. This is the *poſitive part* of a *Chriſtian*; where, *Note well*, that three Adverbs (*Sobre*, *Juſte & Pie*) do much exceed the three Adjectives (*Sobrius*, *Juſtus & Pius*,) for in thoſe latter are included only Acts of Grace; but in the former are included the *Habits of Grace*; for it is not one ſingle *Act* or two, but a conſtant Habit of Grace, (notwithſtanding ſome interruptions in our way) that gives the denomination of a true Chriſtian. Now this excellent ſtate can never be attained, unleſs we firſt be-

become Conquerors, (through *Christ*) so as to be able to give Laws to our Lusts, (which are called *deceitful Lusts*, Ephes. 4. 22.) and deal with them as *Joshuah* dealt with the *Gibeonites*, who made them [*hewers* of *Wood*, and *drawers* of *Water*,] Josh. 9. 21. Tho' they had deceived him but once, yet our *deceitful Lusts* have deceived us even times, and days without number; and in all other Scripture-instances, we find that evermore the *conquered* become *Tributaries* to the *Conqueror*. As,

(1*st*) Those *Canaanites* that could not be driven out, yet they did *serve Israel under Tribute*, Josh. 16. 10. according to the *Law* of *Moses*, Deut. 20. 11.

(2.) Thus the Tribes of *Israel*, when they became strong, did put the *Canaanites* to Tribute, as *Ephraim*, Judg. 1. 28. and *Napthali*, ver. 33. and the *Danites*, (by the help of *Joseph* his Brother) *ver.* 35.

(3.) Thus likewise did *David* unto *Moab*, after he had *cast his Shoe over it*, &c. Psal. 60. 8. as its Conqueror, treading them under foot; then the *Moabites* became *David's* Servants, and they *brought him Gifts*, 1 Chron. 18. 2. And this was a prodigious Gift unto *David's* Successor, namely, an hundred thousand Lambs, and an hundred thousand Rams with their Wool, 2 King. 3. 4. The *King* of *Moab* was a great

Sheep-Maſter, and his Tribute he paid yearly was this vaſt number of Lambs, (with all their Dams alſo,) and this vaſt number of Rams, in ſuch a ſeaſon of the Year, when their Wool was beſt grown upon their Backs; and many more ſuch examples of Tribute might be added. Oh that we could ask our own Hearts, whether our *Affections* have been *conquered* by the *Lord Jeſus*, the *Stronger Man* and *Conqueror*: NB. *Are all our Affections turned into Graces*, as the *Affection* of *Fear* into the *Grace* of *Fear*, and the *Affection* of *Love* into the *Grace* of *Love*, and ſo of the reſt; then our Lord hath laid his Laws upon them, and they pay each of them their Tribute to *Chriſt*. Oh bleſſed is that Soul, that pays ſo many *thouſand Lambs* (or *devout Prayers*) to *Chriſt* the *King of Glory*, which muſt needs be numerous, if both *Occaſional* and *Appointed Prayers*, if *publick* and *private Prayers*, both in our *Cloſets*, and in our *Families*, for the ſpace of one whole year, be reckoned up all together. If we do all theſe things, then this *Great King* will *greatly delight in our Beauty*, Pſal. 45. 10. 11. and give us *Victory over our laſt Enemy*, *Death*, which *Chriſt* will *deſtroy*, 1 Cor. 15. 26. 55, 56, 57.

CHAP.

CHAP. VI.

Advice to the Aged, for ſaving the Soul.

THIS the Sacred Sentence and Saying of *Solomon*, the wiſeſt of Men, that [*The Hoary Head is a Crown of Glory, if it be found in the way of Righteouſneſs,*] Prov. 16. 31. Which words do diſcover a moſt clear Character of a compleat Conqueror through *Chriſt's* love to us, *Rom.* 8. 37. whereby he ſtrengthens us to a kind of Omnipotency, to wit, of an ability to do all things which ought to be done by us both in Active and Paſſive Obedience, *Phil.* 4. 13. The word [*Proverbs*] in the Hebrew, is [*Maſhalim*] which is derived of *Maſhal*, ſignifying to *Command.* Oh that this Divine *Proverb* may have a commanding power and influence over all us Aged Perſons, ſo that all our [*Gray Hairs may become a Crown of Glory to us,* by their being *found in the way of Righteouſneſs.*] This Text is a compound of

two principal Parts, to wit, a *Theſis*, and an *Hypotheſis*, or a *Poſition*, and a *Suppoſition*: The *Poſition* is firſt; 'tis poſitively aſſerted, that [Gray Hairs are a Crown of Glory,] and then the *Suppoſition* follows, [if it be *found in the way of Righteouſneſs.*] There be three *Enquiries* here to be anſwered, the firſt, What is meant by that Phraſe of [*Gray Hairs*, or *Hoary Head*,] to which the Anſwer is,

(1*ſt*) Gray Hairs, and Hoary Hairs or Head, are promiſcuouſly taken in Scripture for one and the ſame thing, as in *Levit.* 19. 32. 1 *Kings* 2. 6, *and* 9. *Iſai.* 46. 4. *Gen.* 42. 38. *and* 44. 29, 31. *Prov.* 16. 31. *and* 20. 29. 2 *Sam.* 12. 2. *Job* 15. 10. *Deut.* 32. 25. *Hoſ.* 7. 9. *Pſal.* 71. 18, *&c.*

Anſwer the 2*d* is, That *Gray Hairs*, Gray Headed and *Hoary Hairs* or *Head*, are all Synonymical Expreſſions with *Old Age*, with all thoſe afore-quoted Scriptures. Thus the *Antient of Days*, Dan. 7. 9. and *Everlaſting Father*, Iſai. 9. 6. is deſcribed to have *Hair* as *white* as *Wool*, Rev. 1. 14. ſo Levit. 19. 32. There this Phraſe [*Hoary Head*] is uſed [with the Old Man] for *Doctus in Lege*, one that is learned in the Law of God.

The 2*d* Enquiry is, What is meant by [the *Crown of Glory.*]

An-

Anſwer 1*ſt.* This ſignifies the higheſt Honour that can be conferred upon Mankind, a Crown is above a Garland, a Miter, *&c.* a Crowned Head is a Title of the higheſt of all Humane Honours, and there is a great affinity in the Greek Tongue betwixt [γῆρας] Old Age, and [γέρας] Honour; and thus the Lord commanded, [that *the Aged ſhould be honoured*,] Levit. 19. 32. That Silver Crown of Hoary Hairs, which the Finger of God doth ſet upon the Head of Aged Perſons, doth render them Venerable, and to be Reverenced of all, even in all Places and Companies where they come: 'Twas a caution of Reſtraint in *Rome*, *Cato Videt*, *&c.* much more *Deus Videt*, *&c.* inſomuch that they (as it were) carry an awful Majeſty and Authority along with them, both for ſuppreſſing of Vice, and for encouraging of Vertue in their preſence, (where too much familiarity, yea and too much folly with it, do not breed contempt.)

Anſwer the 2*d* This Crown is of the beſt kind of Crowns; 'tis not only a Crown of Silver, (as before) or a Crown of Gold, the beſt ſort of earthly Crowns, but 'tis a *Crown of Glory*, and that in a double Kingdom, namely in the Kingdom of Grace here, (which is oft in Scripture called

called Heaven,) and alſo in the Kingdom of Glory hereafter. So that ſuch Aged Perſons as are found to be God's *Friends* and Favourites, (as Old *Abraham* had that very Title given to him no fewer than three times of being *God's Friend*, 2 Chron. 20. 7. Iſai. 41. 8. and Jam. 2. 23.) they ſhall have a double Crown of Glory, firſt in this Life, they ſhall have the Crown of Reverence and Veneration from all, as Old *Abraham* was thus Crowned, whom the very Heathens the *Hittites* moſt highly honoured, ſaying to him, [thou art a *Prince of God*, Hebr. or a Mighty Prince *amongſt us*,] Gen. 23. 6. even the Natural Conſcience cannot chooſe but ſtoop to the Image of God, ſtampted upon, and ſhining forth in both the Perſons, and Actions of ſuch as are eminent for Godlineſs, as *Abraham* was; and ſo it had been done to him before, by King *Abimelech*, and by *Phicol* the chief Captain of his Hoſt, *Gen.* 21. 22, 23. where they (with all imaginable Reverence) make their moſt Humble Addreſs to Father *Abraham*, that he might make an everlaſting League with them, and with their Poſterity, *&c.* For both this King and his Captain, as alſo did the *Hittites*, all plainly ſee in *him* a behaviour that was more than ordinary to Mankind: They were

were affraid of that Name of God, even that *Glorious and fearful* Name, put upon him, and called upon by him, and by *all his Seed alſo*, Deut. 28. 9, 10, 58. yea ſtill the Sons and Daughters of *Abraham*, even all God's People are called *Princes* in all Lands, *Pſal.* 45. 16. The *Righteous are more excellent than their Neighbours*, Prov. 12. 26. tho' they be never ſo great that dwell by them, if they have only *Greatneſs* without *Goodneſs*. The Jewiſh Rabins ſay, that thoſe *Seventy Souls*, which went down with *Jacob* into *Egypt*, were of much more worth than all the *Seventy Nations* whereof the whole known World conſiſteth: *Chriſt* makes all his Saints to be Kings, *Rev.* 1. 6. and to be Conquerors alſo, *Rom.* 8. 37. they are *his* Glory, *Iſai.* 4. 5. 2 *Cor.* 8. 23. and therefore this Crown of Glory is given to them, even in this World; and if we can but become faithful unto Death, then ſhall we have given us the Crown of Life in a better World, *Rev.* 2. 10. and we may the more have hope hereof, becauſe we are not kept by any power of our own, (which is no better than weakneſs it ſelf.) Tho' *David* ſaid, [I have kept my ſelf from mine Iniquity,] *Pſal.* 18. 21, 23. and the *born of God keeps himſelf*, 1 Joh. 5. 19. but [*we are kept by the power of God,*

through

through faith, unto Salvation, and we *are kept for Heaven,* as *Heaven is kept for us,* 1 Pet. 1. 4, 5. that we may receive the end of our Faith, even the *ſalvation of our Souls,* ver. 9. This great work of a double keeping, is wrought by the great Grace of God given freely to us, whereby we are *made partakers of the Divine Nature,* 2 Pet. 1. 4.

The 3*d Enquiry* is, the *Suppoſition,* If we be *found in the way of Righteouſneſs.*

Anſwer. To underſtand the true meaning of this Phraſe, we muſt know, that it is not enough for us, to begin well, but we muſt end well alſo, [*Exitus Acta probat,*] 'tis the *End that Crowns the Action:* The Old Father of the Church ſaith, ſome are [*Sancti Juvenes, ſed Satanici Senes,*] Young Saints, yet at laſt prove no better than Old Devils; who begin in the Spirit but end in the Fleſh, as the Apoſtle's Phraſe is, *Gal.* 3. 3. Thoſe *fooliſh ones* were like *Nebuchadnezzar's* Image, whoſe Golden Head ended in Dirty Feet: They did *Run well* at the firſt, but the Devil hindred them in the way, *Gal.* 5. 7. not only making them ſtop, and ſtep back, but alſo to ſtep aſide into *crooked Paths,* Pſal. 125. 5. and *ran a whoring* from God, *Pſal.* 73. 27. therefore the *Lord will lead them forth with the workers*

workers of iniquity: The doom of ſuch is denounced [the *backſlider in heart* ſhall be filled *with his own ways*,] Prov. 14. 14. As he hath made a match with Miſchief, ſo he ſhall ſoon have his Belly full of it; as he hath *ſold himſelf to work wickedneſs*, as *Ahab* did, 1 *Kings* 21. 25. ſo he ſhall be ſure of a ſad Paiment at laſt. He hath *drawn back unto perdition*, and God ſaith, [*My Soul ſhall have no pleaſure in you*,] Heb. 10. 37, 38. Such as ſteal away from their Colours, run from their Captain, and revolt from *Chriſt*, muſt expect no better than Martial Law; *Apoſtates* indeed are Renegadoes, they run away, but 'tis into the Mouth of Hell; ſo a worſe condition they cannot chooſe for themſelves: Whereas the Righteous (on the contrary) do *hold on in their way*, (both in their Youth, and in their Old Age,) and *grow ſtronger* and *ſtronger*, Job 17. 9. He may indeed ſtumble ſometimes upon ſome Stumbling-ſtone or Block, that is laid in his way, as *David* himſelf had his Stumbling-time, at the proſperity of the Wicked, and his own Adverſity, *Pſal.* 73. 13, 14, 15. where we find his ſtumble was ſo deep and dangerous, that he was ready to repent of his Repentance; but as he that ſtumbles, and falls not, gains ground by his ſtumbling in taking a

longer ſtride thereby, ſo did *David* here, who upon ſecond thoughts, (ever better than the firſt) recoiling and reflecting upon himſelf, ſaying, [*this is my Infirmity,*] and Oh how he bebeaſts himſelf for ſo *ſtumbling!* ver. 22. ſo *fooliſh was I*, and *Ignorant*, and even *as a Beaſt before thee*, my God,] the Hebrew word for *Beaſt* is *Behemoth*; which is the plural feminine Hebrew, ſignifying a Big-bellied Beaſt, full of Young Ones, (which is a clear reſemblance of *Original Sin* in us, the Mother of all Actual Sins,) and the ſame word [*Behemoth*] the Lord uſeth in his Humbling Speech to *Job*, Job 40.15,to 24. whereby is expreſſed, that Monſter of Beaſts, the Beaſt of Beaſts, the *Elephant*. By this (and by other Speeches of the ſame tendency) God ſo humbled *Job*, as to make him [*abhor himſelf*, and to *repent in* Duſt and Aſhes,] *Job* 42. 5. Thus likewiſe that Holy Man *Agur*, who vilifies, yea nullifies himſelf to the utmoſt, ſaying, [*ſurely I am more brutiſh than any Man*, and I have not the *underſtanding of a Man*, &c.] Prov. 30. 2,3. Here was true *Humility*, which is derived *ab Humo*, ſignifying the *Ground*, becauſe this Grace lays us flat on the ground; thus theſe godly perſons (and many more upon Scripture-record) did indeed ſtumble *in the way*

way of Righteouſneſs, yea and ſome of them very *fouly*, yet none of them did ſo ſtumble, as to fall finally from that bleſſed way; they all did recover themſelves by Repentance, they all did return to this way of Righteouſneſs; and they all did perſevere therein to their dying day: So their *Gray Hairs* became a *Crown of Glory* to them, being all *found in the way of Righteouſneſs*, *Note well*, we muſt all be found in that way, when both Old Age and Death alſo come to find us. Old Father *Chryſoſtom* ſaid, [*Canities tunc Venerabilis eſt, quando ea gerit quæ canitiem decent*, to wit, then is Old Age moſt worthily Venerable, then is Hoarineſs of Hairs moſt truly Honourable, when only ſuch Deeds are done by it, that doth well become it both in the ſight of God and Men: We Old Ones ought to make it our *exerciſe* which the bleſſed Apoſtle made his, ſaying, [ἐν τούτῳ ἀσκῶ] *Herein do*, I do *recreate* my ſelf, (as the word ſignifies) to *keep a Conſcience void of offence*, both *toward God and toward Man*,] Acts 24. 16. Oh that we could make this ſame our Exerciſe, yea even our *Recreation* both Night and Day; uſing our utmoſt Diligence, Skill, Will and Affections, diſciplining and inuring our ſelves herein, and thereby we ſhall neither be

aſhamed

ashamed to live, nor *afraid to die*. We must live (as that Apostle did) *in all good Conscience*, Acts 23. 1. *Good*, both with the goodness of *Integrity*, and with the goodness of *Tranquility*; we must keep our Consciences clear and clean, better offend all the World, yea all the *Witches* in the World, than offend our own Consciences; for *Conscience* is *God's Spie*, and 'tis Man's Overseer; as it is God's Deputy-Judge, so it is Man's Domestick Chaplain, bearing witness of all our Doings and desirings; and accordingly excusing or accusing, absolving or condemning; yea comforting or tormenting us; And [if our own *Hearts* (or Consciences) do *condemn us*, God is *greater than our Hearts*, and will condemn us *much more*,] 1 John. 3. 20. Whereas on the contrary, when Hoary Hairs are not found in the way of Righteousness, that Hoariness is so far from being Honourable, that 'tis rather *Mucor* than *Canities*, a nasty Mouldiness, and not a venerable Hoariness. 'Tis sad with such, that the older they grow, they wax worse and worse, 2 *Tim.* 3. 13. and do no better than stink above ground, being *Dead* while they *Live*, 1 Tim. 5. 6. What can be more odious than an old Lascivious Goat, than an old Fornicator, *having Eyes* full

full of Adultery, and that cannot ceaſe from ſin, 2 *Pet.* 2. 14, *&c.* Gray Hairs and Green Thoughts make an abominable agreement, ſuch are Heteroclites in declining Nature, and Monſters of Mankind in the World; in whom it is ſo far gone with them, and Luſt hath ſuch an unlimited power over them, that neither *ſtrength of Grace*, as Gen. 39. 9. in Young *Joſeph*, ſtrong Grace kept him from that great wickedneſs and ſin againſt his God: nor *decays* of *Nature* can reſtrain them from their Youthful Extravagancy, as *Gen.* 18. 12. *Sarah* ſaid, (after I am old, ſhall I luſt,) old and cold is our Engliſh Proverb. It was the aggravation of *Solomon*'s ſin that he was in his Old Age ſo eaſily drawn away from God and godlineſs by his Idolatrous Wives, 1 *Kings* 11. 4. Oh how ridiculous it is to behold a ſinner, a Child of *Fourſcore* or an hundred years old! yet ſuch ſhameful ſights as theſe are denounced *accurſed*, Iſa. 65. 20. But if we indeed be the true Sons and Daughters of *Abraham*, we ought to do what he did, of whom it is ſaid, that he *went to his Grave in a good Old Age*, or as the Hebrew hath it, with a *good Gray Head*, Gen. 25. 8. We muſt imitate him in this herein, even all we that are Old, that we may be *Good* as well as *Old*, that we may

both Live and and Die in a *good Old Age* as he did; for unleſs we walk in *Abraham*'s ſteps in this World while we live, we can never expect to lodge in *Abraham*'s Boſom when we die. *Abraham died an Old Man and full of Years*, Gen. 25. 8. He was as fully ſatisfied to leave the World, as men are wont to be willing to riſe from the Table, when ſatisfied to the full with Food: And thus *Job* ſaid, *I would not live always*, Job 7. 16. but more of this after. It was the ſaying of *Auguſtus Cæſar*, (that Great Emperor, in whoſe Reign our *Lord Jeſus* was born) *Audite me Senem vos Juvenes, quem Juvenem multi Senes audierunt*, be pleaſed, Oh ye Young Men, to hearken diligently unto me, who am now Old, whom many Old Men did hear attentively when I was but Young. *David* ſaith, *I have been Young, and now am Old; come ye Children, hearken to me, and I will teach you the fear of the Loed*, Pſal. 34. 11. and 37. 25. Accordingly, I ſay in all humbleneſs of Soul, Oh that all People (both Young and Old) may lend an hearing Ear to me who am now very Old, whom all Perſons of all Ages did ſavingly hearken to, when I was Young; ſo that the Lord by his Grace made me a Spiritual Father to many Souls both Young and Old, Male and

and Female, Rich and Poor, yea Bond and Free, *All these are one in Jesus Christ*, Col. 3. 11. whom I have begotten in the Gospel, (as the Apostle doth phrase it,) 1 Cor. 4. 15. who all rise up and call me their *Spiritual Father in Christ*; amongst whom there is one remarkable Passage I cannot but record, which indeed is worthy to be kept in everlasting remembrance, namely, While I was Minister at *Cottingham* near *Hull*, that Ministerial Charge being resigned over to me by Famous Dr. *Winter*, when he went over into *Ireland* to be the Provost of the College at *Dublin*,) there it pleased the Lord so to bless my Ministry, as to honour me with the Conversion of many Souls, both in that place, and in other places round about. But above all, there was one *Thomas Raspin*, an Old Man, and one of the most substantial Men in that great Town, who (through grace) had most evidently and most eminently a new work of Conversion wrought upon his heart in his Old Age, and when Gray Hairs were upon him, which indeed made him a most lively Servant of *Christ* to his dying day, *bringing forth fresh Fruit in his Old Age*, &c. Psal. 92. 14. whose Funeral Sermon I then preached, wherein I observed what a rare work of God this was to be

effectually called in our Old Age; for beſide *Abraham* in the Old Teſtament, and *Nicodemus* in the New Teſtament, who were both called home from Idolatry, and from Ignorance, when they were Old Men: And very few more ſuch Inſtances can be found out upon Record in either Teſtament. Now ſeeing this ſignal and ſingular Favour of God was vouchſafed to ſuch a worthleſs Worm as me, about fifty years ago, when I had been but about ſeven years employed in the work of the Miniſtry; if the Lord was then pleaſed to cauſe Old Perſons ſo ſavingly to hearken unto my Miniſterial Voice, while I was ſo Young; how much more may I hope now, that all Perſons of all Ages will give their moſt diligent Attention unto that moſt weighty Advice, (for I cordially profeſs to ſpeak no otherwiſe than as an *Oracle of God*, unto all Aged ones, which cannot prove unſeaſonable to any that are Young; becauſe, if the Lord delight in them to lengthen out their Lives, (and not *cut them off for* their wickedneſs in the *midſt of their days*, Pſal. 55. 23.) they muſt come to be Aged alſo: And therefore let all lend an hearing Ear unto that grave Counſel which I (an Old Servant of Chriſt) doth declare at this time to you in the Name of the Lord. We

are

are told how *Moses* was fourscore Years Old when God sent him with God's Message to *Pharaoh*, Exod. 7. 7. to shew, that the words of an Old Messenger of God ought to take a deep impression upon the Hearts of all Hearers, in case they be not Case-hardened as *Pharaoh* was, over and over again, both by himself, and by God, and likewise by the Devil. But I hope this is not the Case of any of you, (as *Heb. 6. 9.*) tho' I mention the Case of *Pharaoh*. Now I who am very near Fourscore may likewise say, [*I am perswaded better things of you, tho' I thus speak.*] 'Twas *Zuinglius* his practice, when he had been inveighing against Vice, to come off with these soft words, [*Probe Vir, hoc nihil ad te,*] this is nothing to thee, Oh thou Honest Man. So my present prospect through Grace is, that I may prevail with many, either to hasten into, or to keep close in the way of Righteousness, if in it already; *how forcible are right words*, Job 6. 25. especially to prepared Hearts, more especially when *multitude of Days and Years doth teach Wisdom?* Job 32. 7. I have made a long discourse in discovering the many Characters of the *true Conquerors through the Love of Christ*. Now seeing every Conqueror doth win a Crown, which hath this In-

ſcription upon it, [*Vincenti Dabo, to him that overcometh, will I give it*, Rev. 2. 7, 10, 26. and 3. 5, 21. and 21. 7. but my preſent Task is to ſhew ſome Inſtances of ſuch Conquerors, to wit, ſuch Aged Ones as are found in the *way of Righteouſneſs*, the Crown of Life, the Crown of Glory ſhall be aſſuredly ſet and ſeated upon their Houry Heads. After the general Diſcourſe upon this Subject aforeſaid, that all us Aged Perſons may come both to win and wear this bleſſed Crown, I ſhall ſpeak more particularly upon that *Theme* of *Old Age*, concerning its *Nature* and its *Accidents*, and concerning thoſe *Duties* which ought to attend it, whereby it may be made (like *Abraham*'s aforeſaid) *a good Old Age*, &c. 'Tis ſaid to the honour of *Young Men*, that they had overcome the Wicked One, 1 *John* 2. 13. Tho' youthful Paſſions be moſt rapid in them, then 'tis a ſhame for us Aged ones to fall ſhort of theſe, *&c.*

First of the 1*ſt* of theſe, namely, its *Nature*, *Old Age* is, without all controverſie, a real Bleſſing of God, in, and of it ſelf, otherwiſe God would never have made it the matter of this exceeding great and pretious Promiſe, which he was pleaſed to annex to the Fifth Commandment, [*Honour thy Father and Mo-*

ther

ther, that thy days may be long in the Land which the Lord thy God giveth thee,] *Exod.* 20. 12. *Matth.* 15. 4. *Epheſ.* 6. 2, 3. This Duty of Children to obey their Parents in the Lord, the Apoſtle calls it a *Right Duty*, Epheſ. 6. 1. and commends it moreover as a Duty, not only *good before Men*, but *acceptable alſo unto God*, 1 Tim. 5. 4. This Fifth Commandment is called the *Firſt Commandment with Promiſe*, Epheſ. 6. 2. that is, the Firſt Affirmative Commandment, or the Firſt in the Second Table, or the Firſt of all the Ten, with ſuch a Special Promiſe of Long Life in the Land of the Living, [*that thou maiſt* live long,] Epheſ. 6. 3. As good Children do help to lengthen their Parents days, (ſo *Joſeph* did *Jacob*'s, &c.) So God for encouraging them in their Duty, doth promiſe to lengthen their Days; and if at any time God take this Long Leaſe from them here, he grants them a *Freehold-Eſtate* of a greater Value hereafter. If God do deny to give them the *Silver* of a Temporal Life in this lower World, he will be ſure to pay them moſt plentifully with the *Gold* of an Eternal Life in the upper and better World; whereas on the contrary, ſuch as are ſtubborn and undutiful Children, as they ſhorten their Parents

Lives, and bring down their Gray Hairs with ſorrow to their Graves: So God often doth ſhorten the Lives of ſuch wicked Children, and cuts them off in the midſt of their Days, as God did to wicked *Abimelech*, of whom it is ſaid, that *the Lord* rendred *upon him the Evil which he had done unto his Father Gideon*, Judg. 9. 56. Yea, and *Solomon* ſaith, [the Eye that mocketh at his Father, (as curſed *Cham* did at *Noah*) and deſpiſeth to *obey his Mother*, the Ravens of the Vally ſhall pick out that mocking Eye,] *Prov.* 30. 17. God takes notice of the offending Member, and appoints this Puniſhment for it, and a ſad one too; if this be underſtood of the Infernal Ravens, thoſe Black Devils of Hell, thoſe are curſed with a witneſs, whom the H[illegible] Ghoſt thus curſeth with ſuch [illegible] expreſſions, and in ſuch exquiſite [illegible] Thoſe Ravens of the Vally are ſaid to be moſt ravenous, and the firſt thing they do to a Carcaſe, is to pick out the Eyes, as *Horace* ſaith,

Effoſſos Oculos Voret Atro Guttare Corvus.

And our *Saviour* adds to the ſaying of *Solomon*, [He that curſeth Father or Mother, let him die the Death,] *Matth.* 15. 4. All this does make it manifeſt, that

that as a ſhort Life is a Curſe, ſo a long Life is a Bleſſing; otherwiſe as on the one hand *Godlineſs* would never have left to it by the Lord, ſo many precious *Promiſes*, as theſe, (to name but a few of the many) beſide the afore-named.

(1.) God promiſeth to his people (1.) [*That he will fulfil the number of their days,*] Exod. 23. 26. that is, they ſhall dye *full of days* as *Abraham*, Gen. 25. 8. as *Iſaac*, Gen. 35. 29. and as *David* did, 1 Chron. 29. 28. They all did fall like full-ripe Apples into the hands of God the right Owner, and the great Gatherer of them.

(2.) That [*He will take away Sickneſs from them,*] Deut 7. 15. that is, he will beſtow the great bleſſing of Health upon them, which is the beſt of Temporal Bleſſings; for a ſickly Life is a lifeleſs Life, and no better than a lingring Death: *Non eſt Vivere, ſed Valere, Vita*, ſaith *Martial*, Health is the Reward of Piety, *Prov.* 3. 8.

(3.) That [they ſhall be *bleſſed in the* City, and bleſſed in the Country, *bleſſed* every where,] *Deut.* 28. 2, 3, *&c.* mercy and goodneſs follows them all the days of their Lives, as *David* ſaith of himſelf, *Pſal.* 23. 6. as before he had ſaid, [he *asked Life of thee*, and thou *gaveſt it him*,

him, even *length* of Days, *&c. Pſal.* 21, 4. and he deſcribing the State of a godly Man in *Pſal.* 91. he reckons up the mighty Power of God in preſerving his Perſon from manifold Calamities, ſo far as it conſiſts with God's Glory, and the godly Man's good; yea tho' he die of the Plague, (for the beſt are not exempted from common Calamities) yet ſhall he be ſaved from the plague of the Plague, and with *long Life will I ſatisfie him*, Pſal. 91. 16.

(4.) Another Divine Promiſe is, [*cleave unto the Lord*, for *He is thy Life*, and the *length of thy Days.*] Deut. 30. 20. Agreeable unto this is, that Godly Wiſdom ſhall add both length of Days and a long Life, and Peace unto ſuch as are bleſt with it, *Prov.* 3. 2. and thus God told wiſe *Solomon*, [ſeeing thou haſt not asked long Life, *&c.* but Wiſdom of me, yet if thou wilt keep my Commands, I will *add length of Days* to thee,] 1 King. 3. 11, 14. Many more Promiſes of a long Life might be added, but to avoid prolixity this ſhall ſuffice, adding only that length of Days is a tranſcendent priviledge, and deſirable in general by all Mankind. This was *David's* Doctrine, which he proclaimeth with a challenge to the whole World, crying (as it were) with ſound of Trumpet, [*What Man is he that*

deſireth

deſireth Life, and loveth many days that he may ſee Good,] Pſal. 34. 12. *Auguſtine* brings all ſorts of Mortal Men and Women, who all unanimouſly anſwered to *David*'s Queſtion, ſaying with much eagerneſs, every one for themſelves, [*Ego & Ego,*] *I would,* and *I would,* &c. All Perſons do deſire a long Life, many happy Days, and a comfortable Enjoyment of all: But alas how few there be, that take right Courſes to obtain the true Happineſs according to that wholeſom Counſel which *David* doth preſcribe for the compaſſing of it, *ver.* 13, 14, 15, *&c.* Again,

2*dly.* What a bleſſing is *long Life,* may be farther demonſtrated by the many direful Threatnings which the Lord hath denounced againſt wickedneſs, (as before his pretious Promiſes to Godlineſs, *&c.*) that the Wicked ſhall not live out half his days, *Pſal.* 55. 24. and in many more Scriptures too long here to relate, all ſhewing that a ſhort Life is a curſe, *&c.* yet know that in ſome caſes it is a bleſſing, as to thoſe who are *taken away from the evil to come,* 1 King. 14. 13. and Iſai. 57. 1. Juſt as when a Fire breaks forth in an Houſe, then Men carry forth their Jewels, but God conveys his Cabinet into a better World, their Souls enter into Reſt and paſs to Heaven.

The

The Concluſion of this *1ſt Point* then is this, That ſeeing a *long Life* is *promiſed* by the *Lord* to the Godly, and a *ſhort Life* is threatned by *Him* to the Wicked, therefore it muſt neceſſarily follow from theſe two aforenamed premiſes, that a good Old Age, and to *go the Grave full of Years*, and full of Graces as well as Years, (as *Abraham* did) is a great bleſſing of God as to its own *Nature* and *Subſtance*, &c.

The *2d Point* I have to diſcourſe upon, is the *Accidents* of this *Nature* and *Subſtance* of Old Age, which are principally *two*, namely, *(1ſt)* The *Quantity*; and *(2dly)* The *Quality* of it.

Firſt, Concerning the *Quantity* of it, and this is twofold.

1ſt That which was more *ſpecial* and peculiar to the *Antedeluvian Patriarchs*. And,

(2dly) That which is moſt General and Univerſal to all the *Poſt-diluvian* generation of Mankind ever ſince *Noah*'s Flood, not only unto this day, but alſo to the end of the World.

1ſt As to the *Patriarchs*, They indeed lived very long, and to a very great Old Age, yet they all did die at laſt; for the God of Nature did ordain, (upon the Fall of *Adam*) that Nature ſhould decay and

and die at last. *NB. Note well*, That none of the *Patriarchs* did live out compleatly a Thousand Years; for that term of Time is reckoned *as one Day*, 2 Pet. 3. 8. and if any of those Patriarchs had lived out their Thousand Years, then that Divine Doom upon fain Mankind, [*in the Day, thou eatest the forbidden Fruit, thou shalt surely Die,*] Gen. 2. 17. Now if any one of those had lived beyond a Thousand Years, then Man had not died within the compass of that Mystical Day, *&c.* The *Patriarchs* indeed had a very large Quantity, and a long Lease of their Lives; and this was for many weighty *Reasons*, of four several sorts: *(1.) Natural. (2.) Civil. (3.) Moral. (4.) Theological.*

The *1st* is *Natural*, because (1.) There was much vertue in those Herbs upon which they constantly made their daily Meals.

(2dly) The *Climate* where they lived had a most temperate Air, and every way most congruous to their Constitutions.

But *(3dly)* above all, their own Temperance from Surfeiting and Drunkenness, for the Old Adage is, [*Plures pereunt Gula, quam Gladio,*] more Persons do die by Intemperance, than by the Sword, *&c.* These *Three* are the Natural Reasons.

In

In the (2*d*) Place, the *Civil Reaſons* are,

(1*ſt*) They lived ſo long both for the better populating of the World. And,

(2*dly*) For the better ſpreading of the Church of God, (out of the *White Line*) in the World; they lived thus long to beget Sons and Daughters for this purpoſe.

Then in the 3*d* Place, the *Moral* Reaſons are,

(1*ſt*) For the better inſtitution of all *Arts* and *Sciences*, &c. And,

(2*dly*) For the more promoting of their own Experimental knowledge, becauſe they wanted thoſe Books and Libraries which we in our days do enjoy; therefore the Lord lent them ſuch long Leaſes of *Eight or Nine* Hundred Years, whereby they got the greater ſtock of Knowledge by ſuch long Experience.

And in the 4*th* Place, The *Theological Reaſon* is, For the propagation of the True Religion in the World, (as was hinted above) in the *White Line*, the Poſterity of *Seth*, as the *Black Line* was the Off-ſpring of curſed *Cain*, as is made apparent in the draught of ancient Genealogies which are drawn with a *White* and a *Black Line*, all along to diſtinguiſh the *Church* from the *World*.

NB. Note well, (1.) As the longeſt Day hath the ſhorteſt Night, ſo the longeſt Life

Life of thoſe Patriarchs had the ſhorteſt Death; for the night of Death came upon them at the laſt; we read of no Agonies they had in their Dying, &c.

NB. Note well, (2.) As the *Microcoſm*, or *great World* was drown'd (as it were) with a Dropſie, in *Noah's* deluge, and ſhall at laſt be burned (as it were) with a burning Fever; even ſo the *Microcoſm*, or *Man*, who is called [the *little World.*] More of this afterwards.

But 2*dly* as to the *Quantity* or Leaſe of Man's Life, (ſince the Patriarchs time) which is now general and univerſal over all Mankind, we muſt know, that as the long Lives of thoſe *Patriarchs*, near the beginning of the World (tho' now faln under ſin) doth intimate to us, and give us a gueſs, how long Man might have lived upon the Earth, (had he not ſinned) before he had been tranſlated into Heaven, as *Enoch* was: So that the Age of Man began to be ſhortned after *Noah's* Flood, and more eſpecially after the *confuſion of Tongues* at the *building of Babel*; for *Peleg* (which ſignifies *Diviſion*, ſo called becauſe Tongues were divided in that day) and his Son *Regu*, and thoſe born after them, lived not above half the time of thoſe that were born before them, as *Pareus* notes well in his *Me-*

dulla

dulla Hiſtor. Eccleſ. pag. 15. *NB. Note well*, May not we in our Day call our Sons [*Peleg*] as *Heber* did his Son; for in a colour of building up *Sion*, 'tis rather a *Babel*, becauſe of the *Confuſion* of *Tongues* amongſt us, not underſtanding one anothers Languages, *Proh Dolor*, this is for Lamentation, *&c.* Know likewiſe, that after this diminution of Man's Age at the Confuſion of Tongues, *Moſes* comes and mentions a ſhorter cut of the Leaſe of Man's Life, as we are told in the Ninetieth *Pſalm*, which is called the *Prayer of Moſes*, that he made moſt probably when he ſaw the Carcaſes of the People fall ſo faſt in the Wilderneſs, and committed to Writing for the inſtruction of thoſe that were left alive, yet were doomed to Death, as *Numb.* 14. at large relateth; and this Prayer of *Moſes* is fitly placed next to the *eighty ninth Pſalm*, that it might be an illuſtration of that paſſage, [*What Man is he that liveth, and ſhall not ſee Death? ſhall he deliver his Soul from the Hand of the Grave?*] Pſal. 89. 48. After this verſe, *Moſes* reads a Divine Lecture upon Man's Mortality, ſhewing how *God turns Man to deſtruction*, Pſal. 90. 3. that is, God by turning looſe upon Man divers Diſeaſes, turns him now ſoon out of the World.

And

And when *Moſes* had ſet forth the miſery of Man's Life by many ſimilitudes, as a *Watch*, a *Flood*, a *Sleep*, *Flower*, &c.) which indeed is ſuch a Miſery, as cannot ſufficiently be ſet forth by any ſimilitudes, *ver.* 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9. He at laſt comes to determine how ſhort a Leaſe God gives Man of his Life, ſaying, [the *days* of *our Years*, are *Threeſcore Years* and *Ten*,] ver. 10. that is, as if he had ſaid, Tho' the Fathers lived much longer, yet as wickedneſs *increaſed* in the World, ſo Mens Days *decreaſed*; and now their Lives are daily ſhortned, and one Generation ſoon diſpatched away after another: All Men have a quick dimiſſion from their appearance upon the Stage of the World, and all this is done, that the World it ſelf may come the ſooner to its perpetual period. And tho' ſome [by reaſon of a more robuſt Conſtitution than others have, and therefore may attain to *fourſcore Years*,] yet few exceed *ſeventy*, and fewer attain to it; and ſuch as live longer, do pay *intereſt* of Pains, Sorrow and Miſery for their inlargement beyond the generality of Mankind, becauſe the Body is then much decayed, and filled with Diſeaſes, *&c.* And thus *Barzillai* accounted himſelf a very Aged Man, when he had attained to the age of *fourſcore Years* old,

2 *Sam.* 19. 32. ſaying of himſelf [How long have I to live, can I taſt what I eat or drink, *&c?* and [*how long have I to live*] ver. 34. that is, *my Breath is corrupt*, or my *Spirits* are *Spent*, my *Days are extinct*, and *the Grave is ready for me*, *as Job* ſpeaks of himſelf, *Job* 17. 1. *He* was *Senex* quaſi *Seminex*, *half dead*, and felt himſelf *pedetentim mori*, to die by peace-meal, even *ſenſim ſine ſenſu*, inſenſibly yielding every day ſomewhat to Death, and therefore he tells *David* with a moſt thankful Heart, that it was not adviſeable for him to embrace his Royal Offer of a Courtly Life to him, who was now ſuperannuated, and was already (as it were) dead both to Meat and Muſick, all *ſuch delights of the Sons of Men*, Eccleſ. 2. 8. Thoſe days (ſaith he) are come upon me wherein *I can have no pleaſure*, Eccleſ. 12. 2, 3, 4. Therefore 'tis high time now for me, and for all ſuch Aged Ones as I am, to make and pack up our Fardles, and prepare to paſs hence into that *better Country*, which is *Heaven*, (as the Holy *Patriarchs* did, *Heb.* 11. 13, 14, 15, 16.) My continuance can be but ſhort here in this World, (ſaith old *Barzillai* to *David*) and therefore I would *not now leave my Habitation*, (where I may retire and reſt me from the Noiſe of the

the World) but now my whole work is, a firm reſolve to make *ready* for *Death*, and to *lay hold on Eternal Life*, 2 *Sam.* 19. 35, 36, 37. 1 *Tim.* 6. 19. And indeed this is the indiſpenſable Duty, not only of ſuch as are Old, but 'tis neceſſary for all that are Young to do ſo likewiſe, becauſe this Quantity, and the length of the Lives of all Perſons, in all Ages, is very uncertain; the Proverb ſaith, as ſoon goes the Lambs Skin to the Market, as that of the Old Sheep; the *Young may die*, as well as the *Old muſt die*: And 'tis an old obſervation, yea and a true one, that there be more of Mankind, which die under Ten Years old, than they which live above Sixty Years. We all *live in Houſes of Clay*, and our Foundation is in the Duſt, eaſily cruſhed as the Moth, with the leaſt touch of Man's Finger; and much ſooner are we cruſhed with the Finger of God,) *Job.* 4. 19. If our Cottages of Clay had a Foundation of *Braſs* or *Marble*, they might poſſibly ſtand ſome time in the World; but ſeeing our beſt Foundation is no better than Duſt, call'd *Terra Fricabilis*, which is ſo eaſily crumbled aſunder in the Hand of a Child: Oh 'tis no leſs than a Miracle of Mercy, that ſome of us do ſubſiſt ſo long alive upon the Earth, ſeeing the Walls of our *Earthly*

Tabernacles (as *Paul* calls the *Body*, 2 Cor 5. 2.) are weak, and the *Foundation* of our Clay-Houſe is far weaker, being but *Duſt*, light, flying and unſtable Duſt, which is ſoon wherried and whirled about with every puff of Wind: Hence *Man* is not only a Clod of Clay, neatly made up by a skilful Potter, as was the firſt Man *Adam*, [*of the Earth, Earthy,*] 1 Cor. 15. 47. and a Lump of Duſt. *Gen.* 3. 19. but alſo he is but an *heap of Vanity*, yea at *his beſt eſtate* [*Kol-Adam, Kol-Abel*] *omnis Adam eſt totus Abel*, every *Adam* or *Man*, is wholly *Abel* or *Vanity*, even when he ſeems to be well underlaid on all ſides, and moſt ſetled and likelieſt to live, *Pſal.* 39. 5, 11. And again *Adam Abel's compar eſt*, *Adam* is *Abel's Mate:* Man is like to Vanity, and as a Shadow that hath no ſubſtance in it, or ſubſiſtence at all, *Pſal.* 144. 4. and he not only *conſumes away* like a Moth, as *Pſal.* 39. 11. as before, with the leaſt touch the Moth is cruſhed; but 'tis ſaid further, [*that Man is cruſhed before the Moth*, Job 4. 19. It is not ſaid there, *before the Lion*, (that would be no wonder) but 'tis ſaid [*before the Moth,*] to ſhew what a poor thing *Man is*, when a *Moth can cruſh him*, that a Fly can choak him, as it did *Pope Alexander*; that

that an Hair in a Mess of Milk may stifle him, as it did great *Marius* the Roman General, and (as some say) *Pope Adrian* also. Thus *Drusius* (the Emperor, *Claudius*'s Son,) was suffocated with a Pear that was cast up and catched by his Mouth in sport only. Thus *Æmilius Lepidus* was destroyed by a light bruise upon his Toe. Many such Stories I might relate, of this Nature; but to be short, let me add only one more, which I can both affirm and confirm upon my own knowledge, that a great Lord of this Land, (who was my Patron, *&c.*) that was brought to his Death, only by paring a Corn upon his Toe, which did after Gangreen, and struck upwards, whereof at last he died. All these *Instances* (with many more which might be added) do demonstrate the *uncertainty* of our Lives, as there is nothing more *certain* than our Deaths, (for that is established by the great Statute of Heaven, that *all Men must once die*, Heb. 9. 27.) yet as to the time of it, there is nothing more *uncertain*, especially considering [how *Man is destroyed from Morning to Evening*,] Job 4. 20. the Hebrew reading is, he is *beaten to pieces as in a Mortar*, with one Misery upon another, until the very Breath be beaten out of his Body at

yea and all this *from Morning to Evening*, that is, not only all the day long, but even all the *life long*; which is here (for its brevity) compared to an Artificial Day, and such as no Man can be sure he *shall have twelve hours to his Day*: For how many are there, whose Sun hath set at High-noon, even in the prime and pride of their Days they have been snatcht away by the Hand of Death; yea, yet higher, how many do we see whose *Sun* doth set at its very rising; so that they are carried from the Grave of the Womb, to the Womb of the Grave, even from their *Birth* to their *Burial*: And assuredly we all every Hour, as well as every Day, do yield somewhat unto Death, and nearer and nearer do we approach to our latter end; yea and the longest liver of us hath but a short cut from the first Rising of our Sun, to its last Setting, from our Birth to our Burial: The *Psalmist* saith, that [the *Sun knoweth the time of its going down*,] Psal. 104. 19. But this cannot be said of any of the Sons of Men, that they know the time of their going down to the Grave; good *Isaac* knew it not, *Gen.* 27. 1, 2. (except only *Hezekiah*, who by a special dispensation from God, knew it;) much less can we, that are old, know the time of

our

our going down, or the Quantity of our Old Age. The Jewiſh Rabbins do mention three Steps or Degrees in the meaſure of Old Age; the firſt they call [*Senes*,] the ſecond they name [*Annoſi*] and the third they ſtile [*Decrepidi*;] and thus they reckon, when a Man comes to be Sixty Years old, ſuch an one they reckon'd to be reached only to the Borders of Old Age, paſſing along until he ſtepped on unto Seventy Years of Age, at which Age *David* died, ſee after: Then *Secondly*, They accounted him among the *Annoſos*, an Old Man indeed, who lived up from Seventy to Eighty Years of Age; ſuch a Man was got a great way into that far Country of Old Age, even into that Hyperborean cold and frozen Climate, where the Snow of Hoary Hairs lay continually upon his Head undiſſolved. But *Thirdly*, The higheſt Step and Degree, is ſuch an one as liveth above Eighty Years old; thoſe they number among *Decrepid* Ones, that then are Superannuated, declining to a Doteage, in whom all the Senſes of the Body, yea, and all the Faculties of the Soul begin daily to decay, (as in Old *Barzillai* before-named, according to his own confeſſion unto *David*;) ſuch very Aged Perſons are accounted *wondrous Old*, as is the Ex-

preſſion in the Old Singing Pſalms, *Pſal.* 90. 10. for it falls out moſt commonly, that in this wondrous Old Age, we pay the deep intereſt of Pains in dolorous Diſtempers, being the time wherein, (as *Solomon* ſaith) we *can have no Pleaſure*, Eccleſ. 12. 1, 2, *&c.* and according to the Old *Adage*, [*bis Pueri Senes*] Old Perſons are twice Children; as after their Birth, ſo before their Death they become meerly *Childiſh*, which once did occaſion my ſelf to ſay, when I ſaw a very Old Woman, (one paſt all other Work (rocking the Cradle, that had a very Young Babe in it, behold, *there is one Child rocking another*; and thereupon I gave her the beſt advice I could, how it was high time for her to make ſure work for a better World. Moreover, beſide this Rabinical Animadverſion thus Spiritually Improved, we have another more Critical and Chriſtian Calculation of Man's Life, made by one of our Engliſh *Martyrs*, who left behind this curious Criticiſm, ſaying, [becauſe the common term of Humane Life, in the ordinary courſe of Nature, is but *Threeſcore Years and Ten*, according to *Moſes* (that Man of God's) computation, *Pſal.* 90. 10. Now if we divide thoſe Seventy Years into four Equal Parts, then muſt it neceſſarily fol-

follow, that every Man is three parts Dead, when he doth but arrive at the Age of Fifty Years. This ſolid Obſervation doth much ſooner mind us of our Mortality, than that before of the Jewiſh *Rabbins*; and to the ſame purpoſe I my ſelf have (both publickly and privately) taught the like Leſſon upon the end of my four Fingers and the Thumb, ſhewing to the Eyes of thoſe I ſpake to, how the top of the little Finger repreſents our Childhood, the top of the next Finger ſhews our Youth, the top of the longeſt Finger demonſtrates our Middle Age, when we come to our Ακμὴ, or fulneſs of Height and Health; then the top of the fore Finger, (which is a little lower than the middle Finger) declares our beginning to decline by little and little; but laſtly from the top of the fore Finger to the top of the Thumb there is a great fall, and hence is it that we uſually ſay, ſuch an Aged Perſon breaks faſt in a little time; the Lord help us to learn this Leſſon upon our Fingers ends. *NB. Note well*, The God of Nature hath ordained, that Nature in all his created Beings muſt decay; yet this is the Sovereign Power of the Creator over all his Creatures to determine the Time, meaſure and Quantity, when the period of Nature ſhall come to decay,

and

and be diſſolved. Thus *Job* acknowledges this Divine Rule and Dominion of God over all Mankind, ſaying, [*his Days are determined*, the *number of his Months* are *with God*; thou haſt appointed his Bounds that he cannot paſs, *&c.*] *Job* 14. 5, 6. that is, God hath ſet every Man the Bounds of *his Time*, (whether *ſhorter*) called here [his Days] or longer, [the *number of his Months*;] and whether ſhorter or longer, they have both their Bounds which they cannot paſs, no more than the unruly *Ocean* can *paſs the Bounds* that its *Maker hath ſet it*, Job 38. 8, 9, 10, 11. We ſhould think the ſame of the Waters of Afflictions that the Lord doth limit them, ſaying, [*thus far ſhalt thou go, and no farther*, and here *ſhall thy proud Waves be ſtaid.*] This Sovereign Rule and Dominion of God over Man, in determining his Time upon Earth, is made manifeſt, in ordering ſuch long Leaſes of Life to the *Patriarchs*, and ſuch a ſhort Term to the Lives of the following Ages: This is elegantly expreſſed thus by *Tertullian*, [*Vitæ Jugera illis, ſed nobis tantum Spithamas Deus dedit illi Gigantes fuere, nos vero Pugiones, &c.*] God gave to the *Patriarchs* whole and *long Acres* of Life, but to us only a Span-breadth thereof; they were lofty

lofty Gyants, but we are puny Dwarfs; yea, and this Divine Dominion is daily apparent, as the only over-ruling Reason why some, *likely to live long*, do die soon; while others that are more weak with daily Distempers, do live longer than they; as well as it is the Will and Wisdom of God, that we see the Sons and Daughters of Men do die daily in all Ages, in Childhood, Youth, Middle Age, as well as Old Age: And as God hath set Bounds to *Man's Time*, so hath he determined *Man's Task* likewise; thus *John Baptist* had his *Course to fulfil*, Acts 13. 25. the word for *Course* in Greek is [Δρόμος] from whence the *Dromedary* hath his Name, which is a swift Creature, and will run an hundred miles in a day: Thus the *Baptist*, tho' he lived not long, but was cut off by *Herod*, yet he lived much in a little space; he wrought hard, and made haste in his Work, as not willing to be taken with his Task undone. Thus 'tis said of *David* also in *Acts* 13. 36. that he *served out his Generation*, and then he *fell asleep* after he had done his *Generation-work* according to the *will of God*. There is an *appointed time to Man upon the Earth*, Job 7. 1. both for his *Time*, and for his *Task*; and he who bears up the Heavens, prescribes such a *Pillar* be-

fore

fore Man, (with this Inſcription writ upon it, [*ne plus ultra*] thou ſhalt *paſs no farther:* [*ſtat ſua cuique dies*] ſaid *Virgil* of old, every Man hath his Day ſet him wherein he muſt die, his laſt Day ſtands, but all the reſt of his days to that Day are in a running poſture. Some *Lutherans* indeed do teach, that God hath not *determined the period of Men's Days*, but that it is in *Man's power* either to *lengthen* or to *ſhorten* them: But many *Scriptures* teach the contrary, that God hath ſet the Bounds of every Man's Life to a very Day (as well as his *Place of Dwelling*, Gen. 49. 13. *Acts* 17. 26.) and tho' thoſe Bounds may be paſſed, which our Natural Conſtitution in the ordinary courſe of Nature *ſetteth*, yet thoſe Bounds which the Almighty Power and Providence of God *ſetteth* us, we can never paſs: For *Job* uſeth two *Metaphors*.

(1ſt) That of an *Hireling*, Job 7. 1. and 14. 6. Now we agree with Hirelings to work with us *for a day*, and therefore are they called *Day-labourers*.

The 2*d Metaphor* is, *Tſaba*,, warfare, στρατεία, Sept. *Job* 4. 1. becauſe man's life is expoſed to *Pirates*, as before: Now if our life be a *warfare*, 'tis well known how *Soldiers* have their time of *fighting*, and their time of *reſting* according to the Com-

Commands of their *Captain General.* They must obey his Order for both falling on, and for falling back as he pleaseth, *ſtat pro Ratione Voluntas*, his Will is a Law to them. And thus every *good Soldier of Jeſus Chriſt*, (as *Timothy* is called, 2 *Tim.* 2. 3.) must be willing either to *Act* or to *Reſt* according to the Commands of the *Captain of our Salvation*, (as *Chriſt* is called *Heb.* 2. 10.) whether private *Chriſtian* or publick *Miniſter*, we must all reſign up our Wills into his Will, as we read in *Eccleſiaſtick Hiſtory* of a famous *Miniſter*, (called *Martinus*) who being by the Lord ſeized upon with Sickneſs, 'tis recorded how he prayed, [*Decumbens dico, Domine, ſi adhuc populo tuo ſim neceſſarius, laborem tuum non recuſo, &c.*] that is, Lord, ſerve thy ſelf of me, for thy Service is ſweet to me; if thou haſt no more Service to command me, then, *O Father, into thy Hands I commend my Spirit*, &c. This was piouſly ſpoken, yet *Old Simeon*, (as we read *Luke* 2. 29, 30.) ſpake better, ſaying, [*Lord, now let thou thy Servant depart in peace.*] Now this good Old Man, having laid in his Heart, what he lapt in his Arms, (the moſt bleſſed Armful that he ever met with, even the Beautiful *Babe of Bethlehem*) he then ſung the [*nunc Dimittas*] ſo called, even his

his Soul out of his Body, ſaying, I fear no Sin, I dread no Death, I have lived enough, I have my Life, I have long'd enough, I have my Love, I have ſeen enough, I have my Light, I have ſerved enough, I have my ſatisfaction, I have ſorrowed enough, I have my conſolation, (even the *conſolation of Iſrael,*) whom I and other Believers have long *waited for,* ver. 25. even the *Meſſiah,* that *Menachem* or *Comforter,* mentioned, *Lam.* 1 16. and yet ſinging farther, Oh, ſweet Babe, let this *Pſalm* ſerve for a *Lullaby* to thee, and for a *Funeral* for me; Oh ſleep in my Arms, and let me ſleep in thy Peace. All this ſweet Song *Simeon* concludes, with the procuring cauſe of his Sacred Muſick, ſaying, [*for mine Eyes have ſeen thy Salvation.*] This was his great ſatisfaction, that he had accompliſhed his Service to his Moſt Honourable Lord and Maſter, who had employ'd him all his Life in moſt *Honourable Work,* and who (he was aſſured) was going to pay him moſt *Honourable Wages*; ſeeing he had got his Saviour, ἐν χῆρι in his Heart, as well as ἐν χειρι in his Hand, as 'tis ſaid of the *Bleſſed Virgin,* who therefore is ſaid to rejoice, Greek ἠγαλλίασε, danced a *Gallyard,* and to *magnifie* the *Lord her Saviour,* as well as ours, *Luke* 1. 47.

But

but far above those two Instances aforesaid, to wit, (*Ancient Martinus*, and the *good Old Man Simeon*) our *sinless Saviour* saith best of all concerning himself, in his last Prayer before his Death, saying, [*Mine Hour is now come, O Father, Glorifie thy Son*, &c. *I have Glorified thee on Earth, I have finished the Work thou gavest me to do*, and now, *O Father, Glorifie me with thy Self*, that is, *my Manhood*, with the same Glory which my *Godhead had before the World was made*, John 17. 1, 4, 5, *&c.* Our Lord did not did not ask his *Wages* before his *Work* was done; his Time was now come, and he was now Ripe and Ready to be gone into his Fathers Kingdom. This holy practice of our precious *Redeemer* is left upon Record, on purpose, for our instruction and comfort, *Rom.* 15. 4. that it may be a Pattern to avoid that precipitancy, which prevailed over those two famous *Prophets* (*men of God*) *Elijah* and *Jonah*, who both of them in a strong Pang of Passion, desired to Die before their Hour of Dying was come; and therefore are we told, that these great Servants of God were *subject* to the *like Passions as we are*, Acts 14. 15. Jam. 5. 17. It is a sinful desire for any who would be gone to *Heaven*, before their Work

be

be done *on Earth*; we must rather say, [*O Father*, if thou hast any further Service for me to do, I am willing to live longer, &c. *the Will of the Lord be done*, Acts 21. 14.

Having thus far discoursed upon the first *Accident* of *Old Age*, (after its *Nature*) namely, the *Quantity* or Measure of it, which we have observed to be *Uncertain* and *Various*, either *long* or *short*, according to the *Statute-law* of the great *Law-giver*, the *Lord of Lords*, &c. [who hath *appointed all men once to die*, &c.] Heb. 9. 27. even *Methusalem*, (who was the longest liver, upon Scripture-record, and who came the nearest to be a *Thousand* Years Old, which is reckoned a number of perfection, never attained to by any mere man.) Tho' he lived many Hundred Years, even near to a *Thousand*, and *begat Sons and Daughters*, yet he died at the last; see my first *Volume* of the *History* and *Mystery* of the *Holy Scriptures* of *Him* at large.

Now I come to the *Second Accident* of *Old Age*, to wit, the *Quality* or Manner of it, which is either *Good* or *Evil*. Concerning the *first*, How it is a *good Old Age* in its own Nature, and by God's blessing upon it, I have already demonstrated in the foregoing Discourse; and I do design

sign to enlarge much more upon that Point, when I arrive at the Third Part, (after its *Nature* and *Accidents*) to declare the *Dues* to, and the *Duties* of *Aged Ones*, whereby *Old Age* may become *good* indeed.

Now as touching the latter of these two, That *Old Age* is an *Evil Age*, that *Senium & Malum convertuntur*: These two are convertible Terms; *Solomon* the Wise doth sufficiently evince and evidence, in *his* saying, [*Oh, Young Ones, remember your Creator, before Evil Days come, and the Years draw nigh, wherein you shall say, I have no pleasure in them,*] Eccles. 12. 1. Wherein he begins to describe,

First, The wearisom *evils of Old Age*, from the latter end of *ver.* 1. to the last end of *ver. 6.* Then,

Secondly, Of the evils of Death, *ver. 7.* both which he brings in as *two strong motives*, to urge Young ones to be mindful of their *Duty*.

For, *First* in the *General*, All *Authors*, both those that be *Civil*, as well as those that be *Sacred*, do unanimously concur in this point, That *Old Age* and *Misery* are very seldom found separated. As,

(1.) *Plutarch* saith, *Senectus ut Africa semper aliquid Novi adportat*, as *Affrica* is never without some Monster, so *Old*

Age is never without ſome *Ailment.*

(2). *Cato* ſaith, [*Solet Senectus eſſe, Deformis, Infirma, Obliviosa, Edulenta, Lucroſa, Indocilis & Moleſta,*] that is, Old Age uſeth to be Deformed, Feeble, Forgetful, Toothleſs, Covetous, Unteachable and Unquiet.

(3.) *Horace* ſaith, [*Multa Senem circumveniunt Incommoda,*] Many are the Inconveniencies that do encompaſs Old Perſons, *&c.*

(4.) *Seneca* ſaith in his Epiſtle 58. and that out of his own Experience, [*How are our laſt Days the very Dregs and Lees of our Lives,*] when the clearer part is drawn out and ſpent, then the worſt part does ſink down to the bottom.

To add no more of *Pagan Authors,* ſave only *Epictetus,* (5.) calls *Old Age,* [*Vita Mors, Cadaver Spirans, & Mobile Cadaver,*] that is, Old Age is a Living Death, 'tis a Breathing Corps, yea a moving Carcaſe.

Now hear what *Sacred Authors* ſay better than thoſe aforeſaid, is too long to quote together in this place, ſeeing ſo much hath been ſhewed hereof already. The *Book* of our own ſmarting *Experiences* ſpeak loud enough to convince us of the *Evil* of *Old Age.* How many Bodily Infirmities doth daily attend us that are

Aged,

Aged, what *Aches* of the Bones, what *Pains* in the Joints, what *Convulsions* of the Sinews, what *Torments* of the Bowels; how dolorous are those Diseases of *Collick*, *Stone* and *Strangury* in Old Persons; what *Hollow Coughs*, *Distillations* of *Rhume*, what *Debility* of *Nature* incroaches daily upon all our Senses of Body, and upon all the Faculties of the Mind, our Appetites to Food, our Digestions of Food both feeble; so that in a word, *Old Age* is like the *Common-Sewer*, into which all Diseases do empty themselves; and therefore *Old Age* may well be called an *Evil Age*.

Secondly, After this General, more particularly the, The *Evils* of *Old Age* may be reduced to *Three Heads*, to wit, *Natural*, *Moral* and *Spiritual*.

(*1st*) The *Evils* that are *Natural* to it. And (1.) As to the *Body*, Many Distempers do attend it, as those even now named, and many more beside, whereof *Barzillai* complained, as before, 2 *Sam.* 19. 34, 35. All Aged Persons do smartly feel the Burden of it, as that ancient Woman in *Plautus*, who being wished by her Friends (that were walking along with her) to hasten and amend her pace, smartly answered, that she could not do so, for she carried a great Burden upon her Back;

and when no Burden did (as they ſaid) appear to their Eyes, ſhe replied again, that *Threeſcore Years* were paſſed over her Head, and that was her *Burden*. And the ſame may be ſaid by thoſe, whoſe Spirits are much ſpent, and whoſe Strength is much waſted even at that Age; for then *Age* it ſelf alone is a *Burden*, much more in thoſe that live up even to a *Doteage* and *Uſeleſneſs*. This is made more manifeſt by *Solomon*, Eccleſ. 12. where he declares the Decays accompanying Old Age; he ſaith according to our *Engliſh Tranſlation*, [then the *Graſhopper ſhall be a Burden*,] ver. 5. but the original word, Hebrew, ſignifies [the *curvature* or *crookedneſs* of the *Back*, which in Old Perſons ſtands bent like a *Graſhopper*; and this makes the motions of ſuch as are crooked with Age to be the more burdenſome, or the *Phraſe* there is *Hyperbolical*, intimating, that every light matter will oppreſs thoſe with their Burden, who are already become a Burden to themſelves: And beſide this *Natural Evil* of Old Age, as to the *Body*, there is a *ſecond* as to the *Eſtate*, many *Loſſes* and *Croſſes* do come upon them; as the loſs of ſome of their neareſt and deareſt Relations, and ſuch like, complaining as Old *Jacob* did, [who mourned for his *loſt Son many days*, and

refuſed

refuſed to be Comforted,] Gen. 37. 34, 35. and again, [*Joſeph is not*, and *Simeon is not*, and muſt I loſe my dear *Benjamin* too, as he had loſt *Rachel*, &c? Gen. 42. 36. Tho' *Jacob*'s mourning was only for *ſuppoſed loſſes*, yet he had *real ones* alſo, as of his beloved *Rachel*, &c. Many more inſtances may be mentioned, as of *David* mourning for the *real loſs* of his Son *Abſolom*, for whom he made ſo deep a lamentation, *&c.* This loſs of Relations is the greater *Natural Evil*, becauſe it is againſt the courſe of Nature for Parents to bury Children, whereas Children uſe to bury Parents, for one Generation paſſeth away, when another cometh; ſo that a Generation of Children doth (as it were) thruſt out of the World a Generation of Parents by Natures Law. To all this let me add my own exerciſe with this Evil, who have lived to bury *eight Children* out of *nine*, &c. And yet there is a *third Natural Evil* attending *Old Age*, as to their reſpect and reverence from the Younger Sort; alas, how are they as *Lamps deſpiſed*, as *Old Job* complains, *Job* 12. 4, 5. and more fully *Job* 19. 15, 16, 17, 18. and 30. 1, to 11, 12, 13. where he ſighs out theſe ſad words, ſaying, [*Upon my Right Hand riſe the Young, they puſh away my Feet*, &c.] which explaineth what he had ſaid, *ver.* 1.

that *Younger* than he was, did not only *deride him*, and *laughed him to ſcorn*, (tho' they were no better than *Shagrag Dog-keepers*, as he calls them, and moſt miſerably poor, *ver.* 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10.) Yet theſe *Young Scoundrils* dared to *kick him with their Feet*, or trip up his Heels to lay him along. *Job* was wont to have the chiefeſt Seats in the *Temple*, and lowly Salutations in the *Market-place:* He was now *Ancient*, and had been *Honourable*, as he had ſet forth at large in *Chap.* 29. but here he bewails his Miſery, that he cannot have a Room in any Place to ſtand in, but every *paltry Boy is ready to puſh him down*, &c. Thus likewiſe thoſe Ill-bred and Miſtaught Children did petulantly deride that Old Prophet *Eliſha*, yelling out thoſe impudent words, [*go up thou Bald-pate*, &c.] 2 Kings 2. 23. Having nothing worſe to upbraid him with, they taunt that Head with their Scorns, which God had crowned with Honour, *Prov.* 16. 31. And the ſame God who had thus honoured his Servant *Eliſha*, doth likewiſe vindicate this diſhonour caſt upon him, ordering *two She Bears* (poſſibly robb'd of their Whelps) to worry *forty and two* of thoſe Ill-natur'd Children: As their Childhood did not excuſe them, ſo their Idolatrous Parents

rents were punished in being writ Childless, for giving them no better Education; see more of this in my *Third Volume* on this same *History*. NB. *Note well*, Suppose any of us *Aged* Ones be at any time derided by Younger ones, this may allay our Grief, that God doth not lead us into any untrodden Path, for our *Betters* have gone before us therein, *&c.*

The *Second* and *Third Evils*, to wit, *Moral* and *Spiritual*, which do attend *Old Age*, may be put together, and briefly improved. As,

(*1st*) The *Moral Evils* are, (1.) An *over-eagerness* in a greedy seeking of Wealth, and yet a niggardly unwillingness to spend what is gotten; no not sometimes to supply the Necessities of Nature, *&c.*

(2.) A *dull*, slow and cold pace in all proceedings of Business, yea with a timorous and fearful temper of Mind, and yet fretting and chafing at the same dulness and backwardness that he beholds in others under him.

(3.) The *Old Man* is of a *morose* Mind, hard to be pleased himself, and as hard to please others; a froward Spirit is easily displeased, (as we see in Babes at the Breast, *&c.*) yet are not so easily pleased again.

(4.) Another *Moral Evil* in the Aged is, to complain of *preſent Times*, but praiſing *former Days* of old, which the Old Men of thoſe Days did as much complain of, as *he* doth of *theſe*: Whereas indeed the fault *lieth* not in the *Times*, (either preſent, or former,) but in the *Perſons* that *liveth* in thoſe Times, for in every Age, better Hearts and Lives would make better Times.

Then *(2dly)* After theſe *Moral Vices* do follow *Spiritual Sins*, which are found in Old Age, ſuch as (1.) *Ignorance*, a meer Child for knowledge, no Fool like to an Old Fool; and therefore tho' this *ſilly Child* be an *hundred Years* old, he is denounced by a Divine Mouth to be *accurſed*, Iſai. 65. 20. Thus the Old Age of that ſilly Child *Shimei*, (who childiſhly plaid away his own Life) could not exempt him from Juſtice; for it was *David*'s charge to his Son *Solomon*, [*let not his Hoary Head go down to the Grave in peace*,] 1 Kings 2. 6.

(2.) An *indocible*, *untractable Frame* attends *Old Age* to learn the great Myſteries of Godlineſs, as appeared in *Old Nicodemus*, tho' a *Maſter in Iſrael*, and could not but have read of a *New Heart*, which God promiſed to give, *&c.* in the Prophet *Ezekiel*, and in other places of the *Old Teſtament*; yet how *aukward* was he

he in entertaining the Doctrine of Regeneration, objecting againſt it; *Firſt*, [*How can a Man be born again?*] And after *Chriſt* had told him, that the way of the *Spirits working* this work, was *incomprehenſible*, &c. yet comes he off again with his (*How can theſe things be?*] John 3. 4, 10. This *Old Man*, (nay an Old *Maſter* in teaching work) underſtood no more of the Myſtery of the New Birth, than a *rude Ruſtick* can comprehend the profoundeſt Points of the *Mathematicks*, which be no better than *Gibberiſh* to him when he hears them: *NB.* However it is no matter how dull the Scholar is, when *Chriſt* himſelf will become the Teacher, as here; for this *Nicodemus*, who had long been a Night-bird, during the Life of *Chriſt*, did at the laſt break forth as the Sun from under a Cloud, to manifeſt his Love to his Lord after his Death, *John* 19. 39.

(3.) To illuſtrate this farther, *Old Age* is *Self-conceited*, and cannot eaſily be convinced, through Pride of Spirit rooted in it, he is too wiſe to learn, therefore was it that *Solomon* preferred [a *poor and wiſe Child*, before an *Old and Fooliſh King*, who abhors *to be admoniſhed*,] Eccleſ. 4. 13, 14. for the *Young Child* is apt to learn, and ready to receive Inſtruction, and will be as careful to follow it; and all this

is

is *true Wiſdom*: Whereas an *Old* and *Fooliſh King* is not only *weak*, but alſo *wilful*, and his Pride is the ground of his Wilfulneſs; as he is ſhort-ſighted in his Mind, ſo he is ſtubborn and unconvincible in his Will: There have been ſuch Kings in the World, who in their Old Age, have ſhewed themſelves ſo ſelf-willed, and ſo wedded to their own vain Opinions, that they never endured to ask Advice, and if any were given them, what they fancied not, they aſſuredly rejected it; though they ſometimes, yea very ſeldom ask Counſel, yet never follow any but their *own*, until they ruin themſelves and their People.

(4.) As the *Three* former brings Ruine, *&c.* to the *Bodies*, not only of *Old and Fooliſh Kings*, but alſo of *Old and Fooliſh Subjects*, who do harden their Hearts againſt all good Counſel; yea, and that which is worſt of all, theſe *Three* afore-named, bring deſtruction to their *Souls* likewiſe, by their living and dying in that great ſin of *Unbelief*, and *final Impenitency*, which their *cuſtom in ſin* (taking away all *conſcience of ſin*) doth at laſt ſeal them up in, where the ſuperabounding Grace of God doth not interpoſe to diſappoint it. This refractory and untoward, untractable Temper of ab-

abhorring to be taught, hath been a long time obſerved, univerſally to accompany *Old Age*; inſomuch that this was the firſt ground of that *Old* Greek *Adage*, [γερόντων διδάσκαλος,] *Senum Doctor*, a Teacher of Old Perſons; by which *Phraſe* the Wiſdom of the Ancients uſed to expreſs any *labour in vain*, like thoſe other Phraſes, [*Æthiopem lavare*] to *waſh a Blackmore white*, which Phraſe is uſed in Scripture, *Jer.* 13. 23. And to the ſame purpoſe is that *Adage* uſed by Pagan Authors, [*Syſiphi ſaxum voluere*,] a Poetical Fiction, that this *Syſiphus* was doomed unto as a puniſhment for his former Faults, that he was to roll an heavy Stone up the Hill, which then did run down again of it ſelf with its own weight; and when it came to the bottom, his work was to roll it up again; yea, and that which was the Miſchief and Miſery of this Man in this Work, it muſt be his only and continual Task for all his time, *&c.* All theſe *Adages* do demonſtrate the unteachableneſs of *Old Age*, and that if we do not (through the Grace of God) *remember our Creator in the days of our Youth*, while that tractable Temper continueth with us, but ſtill drive it off until Old, then become we ſo ſlow, ſo oblivious, and ſo ſetled upon the Lees, *&c.* inſomuch that the Mi-

Miniſtry of the Word (that they ſit under) is *labour in vain* to ſuch, and *Chriſt*'s Miniſters may complain with the *Prophet*, (as to ſuch as *hate to be reformed*, and are incorrigible,) [*I have laboured in vain, and I have ſpent my ſtrength for naught, and in vain,*] Iſai.49.4. *NB. Note well*, how beſotted, and even bewitched are ſuch Perſons, to make that the Task of their Old Age, which ought to be the Trade of our whole Life, and to ſettle their everlaſting, and ſureſt making or marring upon ſo ſandy and ſinking a Foundation, as *Old Age* is, well called an *Evil Age*, for Reaſons aforeſaid.

Now the next and *Second Point* to be diſcourſed upon is, How this *Evil Old Age*, may become a *Good Old Age*, as was *Abrahams*, Gen. 25. 8. and *Iſaac's*, Gen. 35. 29. and *Davids*, 1 Chron. 29. 28. [*hic labor, hoc opus eſt,*] this is an high, and an hard *undertaking*; for the accompliſhment whereof, let this be the method. As,

(1*ſt*) The [ʼOn] that it *may be ſo*, ſeeing the *Evil Old Age* (which is ſo in it ſelf, and by decays of Nature,) hath been made a *good Old Age* by the power of Grace, as in thoſe three aforenamed.

(2*dly*)

(2dly) The [Δίοτι] the Reasons why it ought to be made so, because our eternal *Weal* or *Woe* hangs upon it. And,

(3dly) The [Κάθοτι] the *means* whereby this marvelous change from Evil to good may be wrought.

First, of the 1st, That it may be so, 'tis clear, not only from the many Examples of Holy Men and Women upon Record, in both the *Old* and *New Testament*, who all *lived holily* to a good Old Age, and *died happily* at the last; and the Scripture gives this honourable Character concerning *Mnason*, that he was an *Old Disciple of Christ*, Acts 21. 16. And the *Ancient* and *Honourable* are joined together, *Isai.* 9. 18. nor could *Hoary Hairs be a Crown of Glory*, as *Soloman* saith, *Prov.* 16. 31. nor could a *Gray Head* be an *Old Man's Beauty*, Prov. 20. 29. if not *found in the way of Righteousness*: A gray headed experienced Christian is called a Father 1 *John* 2. 13. such, as whose *due*, is the *highest veneration*, Levit. 19. 32. especially such as are described in *Psal.* 92. 12, 13, 14. Such are of the highest Form in *Christ's* School; for, *NB. Note well*, a *Christian* hath his degrees of Growth, distinctly described in the Word of God. As,

(1st) We have his *Conception*, Gal. 4. 19.

(2dly) His *Birth*, 1 Pet. 1. 23.

(3thly)

(3dly) His *Childhood*, 1 Cor. 3. 1, 2.

(4thly) His *Youth*, or well-grown Age, when he is past the Spoon, 1 *John* 2. 13.

(5thly) His *full-grown Age*, Ephes. 4. 13. And,

(6thly) His *Old Age*, as 1 John 2. 13. Acts 21. 16, *&c.* Job 29. 8. and 32. 4, 6, 7. Rom. 16 5, 7. and 1 Tim. 5. 1, 2. Unto all these Scriptures, shewing how a *Good Old Age* ought to be highly valued and reverenced, I may add the Testimony of a *Pagan Poet*, who extolls that *Golden Age*, wherein he lived, having only the Light and Law of Nature to conduct them in their Lives; yet thus he writes,

Credebant hoc grande Nefas & Morte piandum,
Si Juvenis Vetulo, non assurexerit, & si
Barbato cuicunque Puer, licet esse videret,
Plura Domi farra, & majores Glandis Acervos;
Tam venerabile erat præcedere quatuor Annis.

These are the Verses of *Juvenal* in his 13*th Satyr*, the sense whereof, in short, is this, That in this *Pagan Poet*'s time, all Men looked upon it as a Capital Crime, and counted it punishable by the Judges, if Young People did not rise up, and reverence

rence ſuch as had Hoary Heads, tho' the *Young* were rich, & the *Aged* were poor, *&c.* which is a clear demonſtration, that the *Law* and Light of *Nature* did concur, and taught the ſame Truth with the *Law* and Light of *Scripture*, Levit. 19. 32. and the reſt afore-named, eſpecially when this Evil Age in it ſelf becomes by Grace a Good Old Age, 'tis to be honoured, *&c.*

(2dly) The [Διότι] why it muſt be ſo, the *Reaſons* be theſe over and above that before-mentioned, namely, that *Old Age* muſt be a good thing of it ſelf, and in its own *Nature* and *Subſtance*, (altho' it is made an evil thing, in too many, by *accident*, as before,) becauſe it is a *Bleſſing* which the Lord hath both graciouſly *promiſed*, and performed to many of his Servants, *&c.* And a *ſhort Life* is a *Curſe*, which the ſame God ſeverely *threatneth* unto the Wicked; yea, and *long Life* it ſelf is alſo a *Curſe* unto all *Chriſtleſs* ones, tho' they live untill they attain to the *Age of an Hundred Years*, Iſai. 65. 20. Moreover, the *Reaſons* that demonſtrate this great Truth, [we muſt be careful and conſcientious in making our *Old Age* a *Good Age*,] are principally *Three:* The *firſt* is, becauſe this doing as it ought to be done, will be a bleſſed

Remedy

Remedy againſt thoſe three woful *maladies* of Old Age, to wit, the *Natural*, *Moral* and *Spiritual* Evils afore-mentioned; therefore *Solomon* preſcribeth, the *Remembrance* of *God* in the *days of Youth*, as a moſt comfortable *preſervative* againſt all thoſe Evils which commonly Old Age is attended with, and maketh it an unpleaſant time. As,

(1*ſt*) A *Good Old Age* is a Sovereign *Antidote* againſt the *Natural Evils* accompanying it. As,

(1.) Againſt the *loſs* of Bodily ſtrength, then the Grace of Faith, in the Good Old Age, doth put *Strength* in *Weakneſs*, Health in Sickneſs, and Eaſe in Pain; this comes to paſs by the *force of Faith*, Heb. 11. 34. *Joſhuah* is one of thoſe that was ſtrengthned in the weakneſs of Old Age, which he acknowledgeth, ſaying, [and *now behold the Lord hath kept me alive*,] Joſh. 14. 10, 11. which mercy was the greater, becauſe he out-lived many Thouſands of other *Iſraelites*, whoſe Carcaſes did fall in the Wilderneſs: Yet then he ſaith of himſelf, [*I am this day fourſcore and five years old*, yet *lo*, *I am as ſtrong this day as I was in the day that Moſes ſent me* (*to ſpie out the Land of Promiſe*, Numb. 13. which was *forty five years ago*,) *as my ſtrength was then* (when I will

I was but *forty years* old) *even so is my strength now (at fourscore and five) for War, both to go out and to come in,* [*Viridis & Vegeta Senectus, singulare Dei Donum est*; a fresh and vigorous Ability for Generation-work in Old Age, is a singular Gift of God. This Gift God gave to *Moses*, Deut. 34. 7. and to *Paul* the Aged, (as he calls himself, *Phil. v. 9.*) whose *strength was perfect in weakness*; and when he was weak in Nature, then was he strong in Grace, 2 *Cor.* 12. 9, 10. and thus that seeming Contradiction is reconciled. And this Gift God gave likewise to famous Mr. *Dod*, in our days, who, as he was another *Moses* for *meekness*, (which is a great *prolonger of Life*,) so he was not unlike *him* and *Joshuah* in Health and Strength of Body, when he arrived to an extream Old Age; this was a Mercy which that Good Man most highly valued: So that 'tis said of him, [*Deficere potius quam Desinere Visus est*,] that is, he seemed rather to decay, dissolve and melt away by Inches, than to die by any *Agony* of Death. 'Tis my frequent and fervent prayer to God, that he would grant us an *easie passage* out of *this World*, and an *open passage* into the *better World*; and to die like a *Lamb* is universally esteemed as a great Gift of God.

An exemption from the Torturing Torments of the Stone, of the Strangury, of the Gripes and of the Gout, *&c.* is my *Singular Mercy.*

(2.) As to the loſs of their younger, near and dear Relations, this *Good Old Age* wants not ſufficient *Cordials* wherewith to ſweeten the Bitterneſs, and allay the Grief of this great Evil alſo; as good Old *Abraham* did comfort his own Spirit, ſaying, [*let me bury my Dead out of my Sight*, &c.] when he had loſt a pretious Rib out of his Side, in the death of his dear Wife *Sarah*; not only dear to him, but alſo very dear to God himſelf: Inſomuch that God gave this Honour unto her, above all other Women in Scripture Record, that the Age of her life is Recorded, and of Her only, *&c. Gen.* 23. 1, 2. Why the length of the Life of any other Woman (ſave only *Sarah*'s) is not Recorded by God's Pen in Scripture, our *Divines* render this Reaſon, that it was to humble that Sex, which was *firſt* in bringing Sin and Death into the World, 1 *Tim.* 2. 13, 14, 15. and therefore deſerved not to have the continuance of their Lives mentioned in Sacred Writ by the unſearchable Will and Wiſdom of God. 'Tis ſaid indeed, that *Abraham* mourned for her Death; and ſhe was the firſt

firſt alſo, (that we read of) who was mourned for, when ſhe died; as well as the only one of that Sex, whoſe *term of Life* is related by the *Holy Ghoſt*; and both theſe were done, for the greater Honour of this *Lady*, (as *Sarah*, Hebrew, ſignifies) who was a *Type* of the *Goſpel-Church*, Gal. 4. 22, to 31. and ſhe was the Wife of that greateſt of *Patriarchs*, who is called [the *Father* of the *Faithful*,] and whoſe Boſom is the *Synonymon* with *Manſions* of *Glory*, Rom. 4. 16. Luke 16. 22. Yet his mourning for her was moderate, and not as *without Hope*, 1 Theſ. 4. 13. Her Death had not made any ſuch divorce from him, but there ſtill remained a bleſſed conjunction betwixt them; therefore he calls her [*his Dead*] eight ſeveral times over in *Gen.* 23. 3, &c. to ſhew he had not *loſt her*, nor loſt his intereſt in her, and that he had only *lent her* to the *Lord*, he had only bid her [*good night*] in hope to ſee her Alive again in the Morning of the Reſurrection; ſhe was only faln [*aſleep in Jeſus*,] 1 Theſ. 4. 13, 14. the Union was not diſſolved by Death. As this conſideration was comfortable to this Good Old *Abraham*, ſo it was no leſs a comfort to that Good Prophet *Ezekiel*, when the Lord took from him [the *Deſire of his Eyes*,] Ezek.

24. 16. even that ſweet Companion of his Life: And this may likewiſe be the Comfort of all Godly Couples, and of Friends alſo, when God is pleaſed to make a ſeparation one from another; 'tis only for a time, and not for ever: Our preſent meetings together in this World, are joyned with ſome ſhort partings aſunder; but our Hope in the Lord is, we ſhall at laſt meet together again in a better World, ſo as never to part aſunder any more; for then *we ſhall be with the Lord for ever and for ever*, wherefore *let us comfort one another with theſe words*, 1 Theſ. 4. 17, 18. Oh bleſſed Hour, Oh thrice happy Union! There is but a *Sleep* for a Time, for a Night of Death only; as by *Sleep* the *Body* is *refreſhed*, ſo by Death the *Body* is *refined:* Let it be our care to cleave cloſe to *Chriſt* at the inſtant of Death, then ſhall we *ſleep in Jeſus*, and he will be our Gain both in Life and Death, *Phil.* 1. 21, 22, 23. After this Night of Sleep, comes the Day-Break of Eternal Brightneſs; and after this *Union* here below, cometh an Everlaſting *Communion* in Heaven above. Thoſe Scripture Comforts ſhould come home to our Hearts; therefore ought we to *comfort one another with them*, by Chriſtian Communication, and then may they afford

afford us more *strong Consolation* than all the Comforts of *Philosophy*, (of which *Cicero* said on his Death-Bed,] *Nescio quo modo imbecillior Medicina quam Morbus est*,] that is, I know not how it comes, that the Medicine is too weak for my Disease.] None can say so of those *Scripture Cordials*, which the Lord doth ordinarily water with the Dews of his Divine Blessing The same Cordial did serve to satisfie *Job* likewise in the loss of his Children, looking upon them not as lost, but only lent to the Lord, who had before but lent them unto him, and had called *his own* only home to himself: He still looked on them as his, Dead as well as Living, they were still his, [*his Dead*] (as *Abraham*'s phrase was so oft of his Dead Wife) after they were Dead and Buried. How else could it be said [that *God gave to Job* twice *as much of every thing* as he had before, seeing he had but the same number of Children afterwards, that he had before, to wit *Seven Sons*, and *Three Daughters*, Job 42. 10, 13. He reckoned there remained still a blessed Union and Conjunction between him and them, which was founded upon his hope of an Happy Resurrection. In a word, learn we to say, our Godly Relations are not lost, they are only gone before us,

and we are haſtning after them; they are only removed out of one Room into another, out of the Out-houſes and Kitchin of this World, into the Preſence-Chamber and Palace of Heaven: They have changed their *Place*, but not their *Company*, as Good Dr. *Preſton* ſaid upon his Death-bed. They are only *gathered like Lillies*, Cant. 6. 2. by the *Hand* of *Chriſt*, who hath tranſplanted them into the *Paradiſe* of *God*. Our Lord ſaid to the penitent Thief, [*this day thou ſhalt be with me in Paradice*,] Luke 23. 43. *NB.* Oh Matchleſs Love in our Dear Redeemer, to ſpeak thus lovingly to this poor Penitent, while he was in horrible Torture himſelf upon the Croſs, and paying ſo unſpeakably dear for Man's ſin! yet rejected he not this Malefactor's Petition, *ver.* 42. How much more may we now hope he will hear our Prayers, and anſwer them with *good words* and *comfortable*, Zech. 1. 13. ſeeing the Debt is now all paid, and the whole work of Redemption is now finiſhed.

3*dly* Suppoſe the *Third Natural Evil* do come upon us, to be as *Lamps deſpiſed*, and a ſcorn to Young Scoundrils, *&c.* (as *Job* complained before) in our Old Age, yet is there a bleſſed *Remedy* to this wretched *Malady*, namely, that pretious Promiſe, [commit thy way unto the Lord,

Lord, *&c.* and *he ſhall bring forth thy Righteouſneſs* (in *which way thou muſt ſtill be found*) *as the Light*, and thy *Judgments as the Noon-day*,] Pſal. 37. 5, 6. that is, we muſt in the *firſt place* mind the *Condition* of this *Promiſe*, to wit, of *rolling our ſelves upon the Lord*, (as the Hebrew word ſignifies) and *depend* wholly upon him, both for ſafety and for ſucceſs in all our undertakings: *Kimchi* reads it, *Volue & exonera*, unload thy ſelf by *caſting thy Burden upon* the Lord, (as *David* explains it, *Pſal.* 55.22.) that is, eaſe thy Mind to God by Prayer, and reſign up thy All by Faith unto his care and conduct, [*Truſt* alſo *in him*;] this is of the ſame import with *Commit*, but repeated to take better impreſſion, and to beget more incouragement; then whatſoever we commit to him, he will bring it to paſs in the general, *ver.* 5. Then follows the particular part of this *Promiſe* in the *Second Place* about *Slanders*, *ver.* 6. ſaying, God will ſo *oyl* thy *good Name*, (which is, as pretious Ointment, *Eccleſ.* 7. 1. *Prov.* 15. 30. and 22. 1.) that no defaming Infamy ſhall ſtick to it; Dirt will ſtick upon a *Mud-wall*, but it cannot do ſo upon Marble: Suppoſe we be ſlandered *without Cauſe*, as *God* tells *Satan* he ſlandered *Job without Cauſe*,

Job 2. 3. with 1. 9. and we lie under thoſe *Blacknings* for a time; but conſider how the Earth lieth under Darkneſs all the Night long; yet as the Morning by its ſudden ariſing driveth away that Darkneſs, ſo ſhall the Lord clear up our wronged Innocency; and as the *Moon* wadeth from under a Cloud, and from under an *Eclipſe*, by the interpoſition of the ſhadow of the Earth betwixt her and the Sun, ſo ſhall we in God's time get over all our Evils of this kind, or of any other, if we *ſtill be found in the way of Righteouſneſs*; God will clear up the innocency of his ſlandered Servants, and bring it to light like the *Sun at Noon-day*; but aſſuredly this will be done at the *day of Judgment* however, if not ſooner; for then there ſhall ſurely be a Reſurrection of *Names*, as well as of Bodies, *&c.* NB. *Note well*, we muſt often be pondering in our Minds that *great Text* aforenamed, *Prov.* 16. 31. which runs thus in the Hebrew, [*Gnetereth Sephereth Shebai bederek Tſedakah Timetſeh:*] which in Latine is thus expreſſed, [*Diadema Gloriæ Canities, in Via Juſtitiæ Invenietur:*] this in Engliſh is read thus, [*the Hoary Head is a Crown of Glory, if it be found in the way of Righteouſneſs,*] which at large is treated on before. This *great Text,*

Text, (I say again) all we Aged Ones ought to make the constant Rule of our whole Conversations unto the day of our Deaths, and then will come *the Crown of Life*, &c.

(2*dly*) As the *Good Old Age* hath its Comforts against these *Natural Evils*, so it wants not *Cordials* against *Moral* and *Spiritual Evils*; (let us put them both together;) for then,

(1.) Our Corruptions now are more mortified than ever they were before: Thus *Paul* the *Aged*, (as he calls himself, *Philem.* ver. 9.) could then say of himself, [*I have fought the good fight*, &c.] 2 Tim. 4. 7. He found that *Thorn in the Flesh*, which he had so sorely complained of, 2 Cor. 12. 7. to be now conquered, and his fighting against it (he found) was then as good as finished, because in a Good Old Age.

(2.) *Grace* is then *fortified*, as well as *Lust mortified*; Grace is now more vigorous, more lively and more powerful than heretofore, while it was clogged and overloaded with many youthful Lusts; but [*as the Outward Man decays, so the Inner Man ought to revive* day by day,] 2 *Cor.* 4. 16. This is the Godly Man's Motto, as that good old Minister *Peter Martyr* said upon his Dying Bed, [*My Body*

Body is weak, but *my Soul is well*; 'tis well for the *present*, but it will be better *hereafter*; 'tis well in the *Kingdom* of *Grace*, having overcome the Flesh, World and Devil, but it shall be best of all in the *Kingdom* of *Glory*:] The *Inner Man* in Old Age ought to be not only more brisk and powerful, but also more *fruitful* in the fruits of *Righteousness* and *true Holiness*, or Holiness of *Truth*, as it is in Greek, [ὁσιότης τῆς ἀληθείας,] opposite to *formality*, Ephes. 4. 24. this is God's Promise to the Good Old Man, [*He shall bring forth fruit in his Old Age: He shall be fat and flourishing, being planted in the Courts of his God*,] Psal. 92. 12, 13, 14. that is, he being rooted and grounded in Christ, and living under the droppings of the Sanctuary, shall flourish like the *Palm*, (which is noted to grow very Tall, (always Green, *&c*, tho' it hath many weights at the Top, and many Snakes at the Bottom, (tho' it be not known to grow in our cold Climate,) and like a *Cedar*, wherewith *Lebanon* flourished, and whereon the *Temple* of *Solomon* was built; 'tis not said, [*he shall grow like the Grass*,] as it is said, [*the Wicked spring as the Grass*,] Psal. 92. 7. for if that proud Grass grow never so great and lofty, they shall be mowed down with the Sithe of God's

God's wrath, ſeeing there is *one higher than the higheſt of them*, Eccleſ. 5. 8. and in *things wherein they deal proudly the Lord God is above them*, Exod. 18. 11. Now we Aged ones ought to make a ſerious ſearch, and an earneſt enquiry, whether we bring forth *Fruit in our Old Age*, whether we be *fat and flouriſhing*, eſpecially if we have been *long planted in the Houſe of our God*; 'tis a ſhame to us, that we ſhould be like the *lean Kine* of *Egypt*, which *eat up the fat Kine*, and ſtill remain as lean and as ill favoured as heretofore, *Gen.* 41. 3, 20. 'tis a ſad Judgment of God, when he gives us *meat* to the *full*, yet *ſends leanneſs into our Souls*, Pſal. 106. 15. When God ſends among *fat ones*, *leanneſs*, Iſai. 10. 16. wo to us, if yet we cry out [our *Leanneſs*, our *Leanneſs*,] Iſai. 24. 16. We ſhould all be like *Wine*, which the older it is, the better it is; our Graces, like good Liquor, ſhould run freſh to the bottom, *&c.* our *laſt works* ſhould be *our beſt works*, Rev. 2. 19. Tho' our *beginning* was *but ſmall*, yet our *latter end ſhould greatly increaſe*, Job 8. 7. and we ſhould *hold on in the way of Righteouſneſs*, and *grow ſtronger and ſtronger*, Job 17. 9. *Veteres non veteraſcent*, tho' we grow old and weak in *Nature*, yet ought we not only to retain our

our former vigour and verdure of Grace, but alſo to *grow in Grace*, 2 Pet. 3. 16. from one degree of Grace to another, that is, to the higheſt degree, *Epheſ.* 4. 13. We muſt grow above our Corruptions, eſpecially our Conſtitution-ſins, the ſins of our Nature, our darling ſins, our beſt beloved Luſt. Oh God forbid, that *Eraſmus* his Character be upon us, which he put upon the *Bribanti* or *Flemmings*, (of whom he ſaith,) [*Quo magis Seneſcunt, eo magis Stulteſcunt,*] the older they grow, the fooliſher they become,) Oh, God forbid (I ſay) that any of us ſhould do ſo; 'tis the ſign of an *Hypocrite*, who takes no deep Root, when planted ſeemingly in God's Courts, (as the ſincere Servants of *Chriſt* do, and grow into Fruit-bearing in its Seaſon, *&c.*) whereas the *Hypocrite* is only thruſt in like a Stake into the Earth, and never grows. How then ought we all Aged Perſons to fear and tremble, that we do not run out our Lives in Hypocriſie, and ſo die like Fools at the laſt: And therefore for the undeceiving of our own pretious Souls, and for the better ſetling, and comforting of our own immortal Spirits, concerning our *ſincerity* in the ſight of God, let us compare Time with Time; can we ſay in the *witneſſings* of the *Holy Ghoſt*, that time was, when

when the Assaults of *Satan* upon my Soul have been very *violent*, but through Grace, since that time, I have found them *feebler* than heretofore; yea, and through the abundant Grace of my dear Lord strengthning me, these Assaults of *Satan* are become *less daring*, and *more cowardly* in my Old Age: As I hinted before, let me inlarge upon it here; if it be said to the honour of *Young Men*, (in whom youthful passions are very pregnant, rapid, and oft precipitant and prepollerous, *&c.*) that they had *overcome the Wicked One*, 1 John 2. 13. Oh then what a shame and dishonour it is for us, who are ranked and reckned among *Fathers*, to fall short of the younger and lower Rank, and still remain Slaves to our Lusts, in whom Nature is decayd, and so less grace is required to resist the Tempter, and to bridle in the Temptation. May we not say, that now by the strengthening Love of Christ upon us, we can more easily shake off that Viper (the *Old Serpent*) from off our Hearts, as *Paul* the *Aged* did easily shake off that venemous *Viper from off his Hands into the Fire*, Acts 28. 3, 4. 5. and that without *receiving any harm thereby*, even so we ought to bless the Lord for that Miracle of Mercy, that no *deadly poison* of *Satan* doth now harm us, as our

Lord

Lord did promiſe unto all Believers after his Reſurrection, *Mark* 16. 17, 18. Oh that all we Aged Ones could ſincerely praiſe the Lord for this high Favour, that we now find by ſweet experience, we can better *reſiſt the Devil* now, ſo as to make him *flee from us*, Jam. 4. 7. We can now *reſiſt him* more *ſtedfaſtly in the Faith*, 1 Pet. 5. 8, 9. than we were able to do in our youthful days; and tho' we be able (through Grace) to ſay this, yet out of an *Holy Jealouſie* over our own Hearts, we muſt ſtill make a farther *enquiry*, what is the principal procuring Cauſe of ſuch an happy and *eaſie Conqueſt* over our *own Corruptions*, and *Satan's Temptations*, now in our Old Age, whether we be not more beholden herein unto the *decays* of our *own Natures* in us, than to any *ſtrength* of *God's Grace* freely given to us, becauſe we may *die to ſin* by the deficiency of our natural ſtrength of Body, when *ſin doth not die to us*, through thoſe powerful Operations of the *mortifying Spirit of Grace*, Rom. 8. 13. but more of this after, *&c.*

Now come we to the *Second Reaſon*, why a *Good Old Age* is a great bleſſing, becauſe the goodneſs of it, is not only a bleſſed *Antidote* and *Preſervative* againſt thoſe threfold Evils before-named, but alſo

alſo it is a bleſſed *Preparative* for *Death* at the end of our Old Age, and of our Lives. This *preparation for Death* is not only an univerſal, but alſo an indiſpenſable Duty, for after *death comes the Judgment*, Heb. 9. 27. then is the time of *Reckoning*, which our Lord *Requires* after his *Returning*, (however long or ſhort it be) wherein all Mankind (both the *good* and the *bad Servants*) muſt [*Reddere Rationem*,] or give an exact *account* of their *Stewardſhip*, whether they have *waſted* or *improved* their *Lord and Maſter's Goods*, Matth. 25. 14, 19. Luke 16. 1, 2. and 19. 15, *&c.* as I ſhew at large in my *Fourth* Volume of the *Hiſtory* and *Myſtery* of that *Parable*, pag. 185, 186. Now every Man's *Death-day* is his particular *Dooms-day*, for then the *Spirit returns to God who gave it*, Eccleſ. 12. 7. when the Body returns to *Duſt*, of which it was firſt made, *Gen.* 2. 7. by rotting in the Grave, *&c.* Then the *Soul goeth to God*, not to *dwell with him* (for *there* the Speech is made of all Men, both bad and good, but to be *diſpoſed of by him* for his Final Eſtate; then is the *Soul* (or *Spirit*, as being *there* oppoſed to the *Body*,) to receive its Final Doom, either for *Everlaſting Weal*, or for *Everlaſting Wo*. Therefore to prepare for Death is a moſt

moſt *neceſſary* (tho' it be a much *neglected*) *Duty*. Now ſuch as be good in Old Age, their goodneſs conſiſts in being alway prepared for it, both *Habitually* and *Actually*; they learn to *die daily*, 1 Cor. 15. 31. and makes *Death* familiar to them, both at Bed and Board. Their *Converſation* is in *Heaven*, while their *Commoration* is here on *Earth*, Phil. 3. 20. They labour and learn to live with *dying Thoughts*, becauſe they hope at laſt to die with more *living comforts*. They have Heaven (as an happy Harbour of Reſt) in the Eyes of their Hope, which ſerves to ſeaſon and ſweeten all Sorrows and Sufferings to them, as it was with bleſſed *Paul*, who had his Eye fixed upon that *Crown of Glory* which was *laid up for him*, and for all *Believers*, 2 Tim. 4. 8. and therefore he was not at all diſcouraged at his *light Afflictions*, *which were but for a moment*, in compariſon of that *exceeding* and *eternal weight of Glory*,] 2 Cor. 4. 17. where we have a moſt elegant *Antitheſis* or oppoſition, and a double *Hyperbole*, beyond the reach of our Engliſh Tranſlation. As thus, (1.) For *Affliction*, here is *Glory*. (2.) For *light Affliction*, here is a *weight* of *Glory*. And, (3.) For *momentary Affliction*, here is *Eternal Glory*; and the ſight of this by an

Eye

Eye of Faith, put *Paul* upon his [*Cupio Dissolvi,*] *I desire to be dissolved*, Phil. 1. 21, 22, 23. [Ἀναλέσαι,] there signifies, to *loose off from the shore* of this *Mortal Life*, and to *launch* out into the *Ocean* of *Immortality*, which he accounted πολλῶ μᾶλλον κρεῖσσον, that is, far, far better, and best of all. Thus this *preparation for Death* had caused *Old Simeon*, (before this *Apostle*,) even to sing his Soul out of his Body, as before. This likewise made that Good Old Man *Job* to say, [*I would not live always,*] Job 7. 16. for he hoped to *behold his Redeemer*, &c. Job 19. 25. Thus may we accordingly say, [*we would not be Young always,*] because we have been so hampered and pester'd with many youthful Lusts, which now through Grace] a Good Old Age hath weakened. An *Hoary Head that is found in the way of Righteousness*, doth ripen fast, (like good Fruit upon the Tree of Life in its *Autumn*,) and becomes day by day more mellow for Death, and hath nothing then to do, but to die, being able (through Mercy) to say with his sweet *Saviour*, [*Father, I have finished my work, which thou gavest me to do in the World,*] John 17. 5. Oh, how ready was *David*, how willing, and how prepared to die, and to *fall asleep in Jesus*, 1 Thes. 4. 14.

when he could ſay, (*his Conſcience* bearing witneſs with him in the Holy Ghoſt, as *Rom.* 9. 1.) that he had *ſerved out his Generation*,) in his whole Generation-work) *according to the will of God*, Acts 13. 36.

The *Third Reaſon* why a *Good Old Age* is a moſt rich Bleſſing, and Benefit to the Sons and Daughters of Mankind, is, becauſe it doth priviledge them with a true Title unto Manſions of Glory, prepared for them in a better World: Such as have continued in ways of Holineſs all their Life, and become *faithful unto death*, Rev. 2. 10. they ſhall aſſuredly at the laſt arrive at the Haven of Heaven and Happineſs when they die; for God himſelf hath aſſured us, (and God Keeps the beſt and ſureſt Enſuring Office,) that *having our Fruit unto Holineſs, then our end ſhall be Eternal Life*, Rom. 6. 22, 23. for then comes firſt the *Joy of Harveſt*, as when fruitful Fields are *white unto Harveſt*, John 4. 35. then comes the Huſbandman with his Sithe or Sickle, and cuts down his Corn, binds it up in Bundles, and carries it Home to his Barn, *&c.* even ſo, *God* the great *Husbandman*, (as *Chriſt* calls him, John 15. 1.) when he ſees his old Servants, (as it were) white unto Harveſt with *Hoary Heads*, and fully ripened

ripened in the *way* of *Righteouſneſs*; then doth he take them down by the hand of *Death*, and gathers them Home into his heavenly Garners. Our Lord doth certifie this great Truth to us, over and over again, ſaying, [that *Heaven is ſurely ſecured for us*, and we are likewiſe *ſafely ſecured* for *Heaven* by the *mighty Power of God*, the word there [φρουρουμένοι] ſignifieth we are *kept as with a Guard*, and in a *Garriſon*, and that at the laſt, [we ſhall *receive the end of our Faith*, even the *ſalvation of our Souls*, 1 Pet. 1. 4, 5, 9. Inſomuch that Death, which is in it ſelf no other than *Nature's Divorce*, the Bodies Priſon, the Soul's Baniſhment, the Arreſt of Judgment, the Curſe of Sin, and the *King of Terrors*, (as well as the *Terror of Kings*,) Job 18. 14. unto all Mankind in General; yet ſuch a change doth the power of Godlineſs (both in *Young* and *Old*, that are *choſen* and *called*,) make in their Changes from one World to another; that their *Death's* is only their (1.) *Harveſt* or Ingatherings into God's Garner, &c. (2.) 'Tis the *Joy of Marriage*, which is called a *Reſt* in the Houſe of the Husband, *Ruth* 3. 1. ſo *Death is our Reſt*, *A Reſt from their Labours*, Rev. 14. 13. they ſhall *Reſt*,

(*1ſt*) From their *Labours* of *Neceſſity*, their Needs of Nature ſhall then ceaſe for ever, they ſhall *Hunger* no more, they ſhall *Thirſt* no more, &c. as they have done while in the Body.

(*2dly*) They ſhall *Reſt* from their *Labours* of *Infirmity*, they ſhall never complain of any more Aches and Pains in any one of the parts of the Body, as they have done frequently heretofore in the time of their Mortality.

(*3dly*) From the *Labours* of their *Callings*, &c. they ſhall toil no more in the *Sweat* of either their *Brows* or their *Brains*, &c.

And (*4thly*) Which is above all, they ſhall *Reſt* from their *Labours* of *Iniquity*, *a Laboribus Peccati*, as well as *Officii*; they ſhall never ſin any more, whereas heretofore, in the time of their ſojourning upon Earth, they had this weight upon them, which they could never *lay aſide*, nor caſt it off; and *ſin did then eaſily beſet them*, ſo that they could not *run the Race that was ſet before them*, Heb. 12. 1. Becauſe of the *Law* of the *Members*, that did continually war againſt the Law of their *Minds*, and oft *bringing them into Captivity*; yea, and as oft making them to cry out, [*Oh wretched Man that I am, who ſhall deliver me*, &c. Rom.

Rom. 7. 23, 24. But now *Chriſt* is come to them, and knock'd off all their Fetters, (which formerly clogg'd them, *&c.*) and ſetteth them at perfect liberty, *Iſai.* 61. 1. and thoſe *whom the Son of God doth free*, they are *free indeed*, John. 8. 36.

(3. Death, to thoſe that *die* in the *Lord*, and in a *Good Old Age* alſo, is not only the Chriſtians *Harveſt*, *Marriage* and *Reſt*, as before, but 'tis likewiſe their *Conqueſt* over all their Spiritual Enemies; ſo they have alſo the Joy of *Victory* as well as of *Harveſt*, of *Marriage* and of *Reſt*. They are become by their Holy Life and Happy Death *more than Conquerors*, Rom. 8. 37. even *Triumphers in Chriſt*, 2 Cor. 2. 14. and ſo as they have *won* the Crown of Glory, by their overcoming the Wicked one, through the ſtrengthning Love of *Chriſt* upon them, ſo they ſhall *wear* it, as *Kings*, Rev. 1. 6. and as *Conquerors*, for evermore. 'Tis ſaid [the *laſt Enemy to be deſtroyed is Death*,] 1 Cor. 15. 26. Now to all *true Believers*, *Death* is already *ſwallowed up in Victory*, ver. 55. as *Fuel* is ſwallowed up by the *Fire*, and as the Sorcerers Serpents were ſwallowed up by *Moſes* his Serpent; ſo that they can ſay to *Death*, when it comes to them, as *Jacob* ſaid to *Eſau*, [*ſurely I have ſeen thy Face*, as

the *Face of God*] Gen. 33. 4, 10. Thus that *Esau (Death)* doth meet a Member of *Christ* with *Kissing*, rather than with *Killing*, or so much as Frowns, yea and guards him home to his Father's House, as *Esau* guarded his Brother *Jacob* Home to *Canaan* after his long absence from it; [*he went before Jacob* as his *Life-guard*,] ver. 12. Thus after a long *Conflict* by the *Indwellings of Sin* all our Life, comes the *Conquest* at the last in our *Death*: Alas, we cannot beat *sin* out of Doors as *Sarah* did the *Bond-woman Hagar*; but this *Fretting Leprosie*, sin, can never be either *washed* out, or *scraped* off from the Walls of our Earthly Tabernacles, until the House, that is infected with that *Plague*, be demolished by Death, and the *Stones* and *Timber* thereof be altogether taken down: As it was thus in the *Type* under the Law concerning the *House of Leprosie*, Levit. 14. 43, 44. So it is with our *Houses of Clay* as the *Antitype*, which can no way be *Amended*, but must be *Renewed*; and this is only done in part while we are in the *Kingdom* of *Grace*: But this cleansing Work is compleatly perfected, when *Death* gives us a dismission from hence into the *Kingdom* of *Glory*. The belief of this, made *Old Simeon* sing his Soul out of his Body, and *Paul* the

the *Aged*, Phil. *v.* 9. was not only a *Conqueror*, but (which was *more*) even a *Triumpher in Christ*, as before, for he sang a Triumphant Song over *Death* and the *Grave*, singing as well as saying, [*Oh Death, where is thy Sting*, and Oh *Grave*, where *is thy Victory!*] 1 Cor 15.55. This is the boldest, and the bravest Challenge, that ever any Mortal Man did ring in the Ears of *Death*, in which words he (as it were) out-braved it, calling it *Craven* to its Face, as the Vulgar saying is, and bids it do its worst to him that it could do, like the *Philosoper Anaxarchus*, who with an undaunted Courage told the *Tyrant*, (who was beating his Body to pieces with a great Iron Pestle in a large Mortar, made purposely for that Barbarous Butchery,) in the very Act of his Martyrdom, he most confidently cryed out to his Tormentor, *Tunde, Tunde Tyranne, Vasculum frangis, sed Anaxarchum non Lædis,*] *Beat on, beat on thou Bruitish Tyrant*, thou indeed doth break the *Vessel* of the *Man*, but thou can never hurt *Anaxarchus* the *Man himself*. Much more might this blessed *Apostle* insult over this greatest of Tyrants, that universal Destroyer of Mankind, to wit, *Death* with his *Javelin* in his hand, seeing he was so able as to render such weighty Reasons

for his Triumphing Inſultation as he ſaith, [the Sting of Death is Sin, *&c. ver.* 56. ſignifying hereby, that our *dear Redeemer* had been the *Death* of *Death* by his Death.

Mors Mortis, Morti, Mortem quoque
Morte dediſſet.

The Death of Chriſt gave Death its Death, as it was propheſied of him, [Oh Death, I will be thy Death, *&c.*] *Hoſ.* 13. 14. thus our Saviour did diſarm *Death*, and took out the Sting from this Venemous Serpent; ſo that we may now as ſafely put *Death* into our Boſoms, (in a ſerious Meditation of *dying Daily*) as ſome men (whom I have ſeen) have (with enough of ſafety) put into their Boſoms a *Snake*, whoſe Sting was before pulled out. If *Death* do now ſhoot out any Sting at us, we may thank our ſelves, for our not being more conſtantly *found* in the way of *Righteouſneſs:* If at any time we *turn aſide* to *crooked Paths*, there will the old *crooked Serpent* meet us, and he will not only ſting us there, but alſo leave his Sting behind him in us, (as the *Bee* doth to thoſe that are ſtung by it,) and this may be the procuring Cauſe of many ſad effects, namely, of much ſmartings, burning pains and ſor-

rows,

rows, if that Sting be not timely drawn out by the Grace of true Repentance: The Lord himself preached that Stinging Sermon unto *Cain*, [*If thou doſt well, ſhalt thou not be accepted? but if thou doſt evil, then ſin lies at thy Door,*] that is, like a *mighty Maſtiff-Dog*, which lies ſleeping at the Door, and if once awakened, he is there ready to pull out the *Throat* of the *Soul*, Gen. 4. 7. And *Moſes* tells the People, (agreeable to this caution of the great God to *Cain*,) [*and ſurely your ſin will find you out,*] Numb. 32. 23. that is, the *Guilt* of ſin will haunt you at your Heels like a Blood-Hound, and the puniſhment of it will overtake you, *&c.* Yet ſuch as do *ſurely find out their ſin* by an unfeigned Repentance, before their ſin thus *fearfully find out them*, even all ſuch as *confeſſeth and forſaketh their ſin, ſhall find mercy*, Prov. 28. 13. Then if *Death* at laſt put forth any Sting at us, 'tis no more harmful than an enchanted Sting; like thoſe *Serpents* which the *Sorcerers* of *Egypt* raiſed up by their *Enchantments*, Exod. 7. 12. they were not really *Serpents*, but in appearance only, and ſo their Stings were like themſelves, mere *Phantaſms*, which could not really ſting any one true *Iſraelite*; and as their *Mock-Serpents* were ſwallowed

lowed up by *Moſes* his *real one*, even ſo *Chriſt* (who is *Life Eſſential*) hath *ſwallowed up Death in Victory*, as before. So that now, (through the Grace of *Chriſt*) tho' Death may buzz about our Ears, like a Drone-Bee that hath loſt its Sting, yet it cannot ſting us with any mortal Sting, for that is quite loſt in the death of *Chriſt* for all his Redeemed; as *Chriſt* hath taken away, not *ſin* it ſelf, but the *Guilt* of ſin: So nor hath he taken away *Death* it ſelf, but the *Sting* of it. Thus *Auguſtine* doth phraſe this double Purchaſe of *Chriſt* for us, both in reſpect of *Sin*, and in reſpect of *Death*, ſaying, [*Chriſtus tollit, & Peccatum, & Mortem nonne ſint, ſed ne obſint,*] our Lord indeed doth take away both *Sin* and *Death* from us, yet not that they ſhould not *be at all*, but that they ſhould not *be hurtful* to thoſe for whom he died: And 'tis for this glorious Priviledge that the *Apoſtle Paul* (as one of *Chriſt*'s chief Heraulds) proclaimeth openly to the World, and that with a world of Solemnity and Triumph, his own Victory over Death by his dear Redeemer, 1 *Cor.* 15. 57. and therefore exhorts us to be *always ſtedfaſt and unmoveable, and always abounding in the work of the Lord, well-knowing that our Labour ſhall not be*

in

in vain in the Lord, ver. 58. The ſame *Apoſtle* ſaith with ſuch a firm Faith, (which both took Root downward, and brought forth Fruit upward,) that for him to *live was Chriſt*, and to *die was gain*; and he *longed to be diſſolved*, Phil. 1. 21, 22, 23.

(5*thly*) 'Tis his *returning Home to his Father's Houſe*, &c. becauſe *death* to a Good Man is the *day-break* of an *eternal Brightneſs*; 'tis as the *Vally of Achor*, as a *Door of Hope* into the celeſtial *Canaan*, Joſh. 7. 24, 27. and 15. 7. Hoſ. 2. 15. even into that *Heavenly Country* unto which the *Holy Patriarchs* ſo earneſtly *preſſed to enter*, Heb. 11. 13, 14, 15. and (as it were) *haſtened Home* thither, where their *Father was*, and their *All alſo*. Hereupon for them to die, was no more but *repateraſſe*, (as Father *Bernard* phraſeth it) that is, to *go Home again* to their *Father*'s Houſe, whither when *they come*, they are aſſured of a moſt hearty, and of a moſt *happy welcome*. The *Parable* of the *penitent Prodigal*, and his *compaſſionate Father*'s meeting together at Home with Feaſting and exceeding great Joy, *Luke* 15. 20, 23, 24. doth illuſtrate this. The *Prodigal only came*, but the *Father ran and fell upon his Neck, and kiſſed him, and killed the fatted Calf for him*,

him, and put the beſt Robe upon him, &c. *to make him welcome*; yet all this was but a dim ſhadow of that *exceeding, exceſſive* and *eternal meeting* of our Heavenly Father with his dear Children, to whom Chriſt moſt lovingly ſpeaketh, [*Come ye bleſſed of my Father, inherit the Kingdom prepared for you, from the foundation of the World*, Matth. 25. 34. Oh the infinite Bowels of a Father yerning over his Adopted Sons and Daughters, as if he had thus ſaid, [*Where have you been, my dear Darlings, all this time of my long abſence from you, and of yours from me, come now, and heartily welcome*; come now into my Boſom, which is now wide open to receive you, as the *welcomeſt Gueſts* that ever accoſted me; ye ſhall *lie warm in my Boſom to all Eternity*, &c. and with *Crowns of Glory* upon your *Heads*, ye ſhall ſing *Hallelujahs* unto the Lord for ever and ever.] *NB. Note well*, To know this upon a dying Bed, cannot but be a *Rich Cordial*, to know that *death* is only *Porta Cœli, & Janua Vitæ*, the Poſtern Gate to the Heavenly City, and the Narrow Door to Everlaſting Life; that it is our reſtoration into a better *Paradiſe*, than that was out of which the firſt *Adam* was baniſhed at firſt by his *ſinning*; but this *Heavenly Paradiſe*. The

Second

Second Adam purchased for us by his suffering that *death* doth now (by the purchase of *Christ*) bring to us both, [*Malorum omnium Ademptionem, & Bonorum omnium Adentionem,*] that is, the *removing of all that is evil*, and the *receiving* of all that is good. This consideration brought *Paul* out of his *Strait*, (when he had been musing and doubting) and *knew not what he should choose, whether Life or Death:* at last he breaks forth into this *resolve*, [*Cupio Dissolvi,*] *I desire to be dissolved*, and to return Home to my Father's House, from whom I expect to hear, [*Well done thou good and faithful Servant, enter thou into the Joy of thy Lord,*] Matth. 24. 21, 23. Which is a *Joy* so big, so great, that it cannot *enter* into us, [*Quicquid Recipitur, recipitur ad Modum Recipientis,*] saith the *Philosopher*, the *Vessel* receiving must have a Measure congruous to, and capable of the Matter *received*. Now because our Vessels are not large enough for this *Joy* to enter into us, therefore is it said, that we must *enter into it*; for indeed it is such a *Joy*, as is more meet for the *Lord* and *Master*, than for the *Servant*; yet such a liberal *Lord* do we serve, as will honour his Servants with such matchless *Joy*. We serve a most *Honourable*

rable Maſter, who employs us in moſt *Honourable Work*, and will at laſt pay us with moſt *Honourable Wages*.

Unto all this aforeſaid, let me add the *Chriſtian's Charter*, as another pretious *Cordial* unto a *dying Saint*, namely, the *large Inventory* which the bleſſed *Apoſtle* diſtinctly deſcribeth, that belongeth to every true Believer, ſaying, [*all things are yours, whether the World,* (and ſo you loſe nothing when you leave the World) or *Life*, or *Death*, or *things preſent*, or *things to come*, *all are yours*; and ye *are Chriſt's*, and *Chriſt is God's*,] 1 Cor. 3. 21, 22, 23. that is, the World is theirs, tho' not in *poſſeſſion*; yet by way of *Reduction*, ye ſhall have *Food and Raiment convenient for you*, Prov. 30. 8. Heb. 13. 5. and ye ſhall have the beſt things of a better World, in a way of *Reverſion*, ſeeing you are *Chriſt's* and *Chriſt* is *God's*. And 'tis no trifling part of this *Inventory* neither, that *Death* is *theirs*; for that is of great value with God himſelf, as 'tis ſaid, [*pretious in the ſight of the Lord is the death of his Saints*,] Pſal. 116. 15. Nor is the *Title*, the *Term* and the *Tenure* that the Chriſtian holds this part of his *Character* and *Inventory* by, but (as the *Apoſtle* there obſerveth)

veth) the *fulleſt*, the *longeſt*, and the *ſureſt* of all others. For,

(1.) The *Title* is the *fulleſt*, as 'tis both by *Purchaſe*, and by *Conqueſt*. Alſo,

(2.) The *Term* is the *laſtingeſt*, as it includes both *time preſent*, and *to come*; not only *Poſſeſſion*, but *Reverſion* too. And,

(3.) The *Tenure* is the ſafeſt, as it is the higheſt; 'tis a *Tenure* in *Capite*, entailed for greater ſecurity upon the Crown; therefore is this Famous *Clauſe* added, *all are yours*, (*ſafe enough*) becauſe *you are Chriſt's*, and *Chriſt is God's*, &c.

CHAP.

CHAP. VII.

Means for making Old Age, to become a Good Age.

NOW I come to the *Third Particular*, after,

(*1ſt*) The [Ὅτι] that *Old Age may be a Good Age.* And after,

(*2dly*) The [Διότι] Or Reaſons why it muſt be ſo, *&c.* Then,

(*3dly*) The [Καθότι] Or the *Means* and *Manner* how this Age which is *Evil*, in, and of it ſelf, may be made a *Good Age.* In order hereunto, we muſt,

Firſt, Conſider the *Dues*, which by a Divine Appointment ought to be *duly paid unto Old Age.* And,

Secondly, We muſt conſider the *Duties*, which likewiſe by a Divine Appointment ought to be *daily practiſed* in our Old Age. *NB. Note well*, The former of theſe two hath its Dependency upon the *latter* of them; for if thoſe *Duties* preſcribed by God's Precept, be not *daily practi-*

practiſed in our *Old Age*, then thoſe *Dues* (of *Honour* and *Reverence*) which are *propounded* alſo by *God's Premiſe*, can never be *duly paid* to our Old Age; but the contrary, even Scorn and Contempt.

Firſt, Of the *firſt* of theſe, namely, the *Dues* that are the Due Homage and Divine Debt which God commands all Mankind to pay unto Old Age. As,

(1.) In *Levit.* 19. 32. (which hath been ſpoken to before,) where God's Charge runs in this Senſe, [*Do thou Honour the Face of the Old Man, if thou feareſt God, who will ſurely puniſh thee, if thou doſt it not.*] And,

(2.) God took it heinouſly at the Hands of the King of *Babylon*, ſaying to him, [*Upon the Ancients haſt thou very heavily laid thy Yoke, and ſhewed them no Mercy,*] Iſai. 47. 6.

(3.) God did reckon it as a great and grievous Crime to have the *Aged* and Ancient Ones *deſpiſed* by the *Younger* Sort, and therefore he threatens this as a puniſhment to the ſtubborn *Jews*, [that *the Child ſhall behave himſelf proudly againſt the Ancient*,] Iſai. 3. 5. Such ſins as are threatned for puniſhments, are uſually great ſins; and had not the ſawcy Carriage of Children towards the Aged, (eſpecially towards their own Aged Parents,)

been a notorious injury unto Old Persons; it would never have been threatned as a *Curse* and *Punishment*. If it were a great *wrong*, it was also a great *sin*; and if it were a great *sin*, it must expect a great *Plague* and Punishment. Many more Scriptures might here be added, with a short descant upon them; but to be short, this brief following Reference shall suffise.

As, (4) *Prov.* 20. 29.

(5.) *Lam.* 5. 12.

(6.) *Job* 29. 8. and 32. 4, 6, 7. And,

(7.) *Rom.* 16. 3.

(*Lastly,*) 1 *Tim.* 5. 1,2. All which Scriptures do plainly hold forth, what Respect and Reverence ought to be given, and is commanded by the great God to be given unto Aged Persons, even in those Purest times of the *Old* and *New Testaments*, and how can we learn to write after a more perfect Pattern, and a more infallible Copy. Yea, and upon a brief search of the *Ancient Fathers* of the Church, soon after those pure Scripture-times, I do find this grave and solid Testimony concerning this very Point of the Honour of Old Age, in *Clemens Alexandrinus* his Book, called *Pædagogus*, written in the Year of our Lord, 194. who in his *Third Book* of that before-named Title, speaks thus, [*Non est malum Senem videri, cum hoc*

quod

quod ſis, celare non poſſis: Quo ergo magis Homo feſtinat ad finem, tanto eſt vere Venerabilior, ut qui Deum ſolum habeat ſe Seniorem, nam ille quoque eſt Æternus Senex, qui eſt iis quæ ſunt Antiquior. Antiquum Dierum illum vocavit Propheta.] That is in *Engliſh* thus, [It is no evil to ſeem Old, ſeeing ſuch as be ſo, cannot conceal it with any Paintings, (as the ſame Father, a little before this, ſaith, ſuch painters of themſelves cannot put off Old Age, as the Serpent doth his Slough, *&c.*) For by how much the more a Man haſtneth unto his end, by ſo much the more he becometh Venerable, and the more to be Honoured, as one who hath God alone to be more Ancient than he, who is likewiſe Eternally Old; and the Prophet *Daniel* calls him the *Ancient of Days.*] And the ſame Father adds, [*Senum Corona è multa experientia,* &c.] That the Crown of Old Men, is much Prudence and Experience, *&c.* To omit the other Fathers, for avoiding prolixity, let me only add *two more Teſtimonies* to this great Truth.

The *Firſt* is, That Critick Philoſopher, who ſaith, [*Cognata ſunt,* γῆρας & γέρας.] The former word ſignifies *Old Age*, and the latter, *Honour*; ſo theſe two are of near a Kin in the Greek Language; and

agreeable hereunto is the Hebrew reading, *Isai.* 9.15. where the *Ancient* and the *Honourable* are joined together.

The *Second Testimony* is that of the great Historian *Livy*, in his 26th Book, (speaking of an Army, how the Younger Bands gave place to the Elder,) useth these words, [*Vix ut verisimile est, Parentum quoque hoc seculo vilis, leviscque apud Liberos Authoritas,*] that is, the Report of former purer golden Times when the Younger had such a Veneration for the Elder, seems almost incredible for now we see this present Age is of another Mettal than Gold, wherein we behold the disrespect that is commonly shewed, not only to Old Men, but also to Old Parents, (whose Authority over their Children is oft vile and contemptible, *&c.*) yea slighting them most when they should respect them most much unlike to young *Joseph*, who nourished his Old Father *Jacob* in his Old Age, and made the last Seventeen Years of his Life, the best and most comfortable part of his whole Time, that he lived in the World. Nor is this all, to wit, disrespect to *Old Parents*, &c. but there is likewise a disrespect to *Old Pastors*, who are thought by *Young Novices* to be no better than *Fools*; whereas (according

cording to the vulgar saying) the *Old* re sure that those *Young Ones* are so, *&c.* Thus it appeareth, that we now live in hat last *Iron Age*, even in the very Dregs f Time, and we must expect, [*ultima eneſcentis Mundi deliria*,] the last and he worst dotages of a decrepid, and of dying World, *&c.*

The *Second Part* is, the *Duties* which re to be done by all of us, in our *Old Age*, that we may not be deprived of hat *Double Crown of Glory*, both of that n the *Kingdom of Grace here*, and of hat in the *Kingdom of Glory hereafter*; eeing those two Crowns are the proper *Dues* of a Good Old Age, by a Divine romise, wherein the great God hath ade himself a *Debtor* unto all godly Aged nes: And if any of us be not such, we hall not only lose the former of these rowns, to wit, that of *Respect* and *Reverence*, but be *despised* for our *Dotage*, &c. *Let no Man take that Crown*, Rev. 3. 11. n this Life; but that which is worst of ll, we shall lose likewise the latter, and he better Crown in the Life to come. Therefore to prevent this double loss, many *Duties* are to be done.

The *First Duty* is, We must *examine ur States*, and *Standings* Godward, *&c.* whether we be still in the *State* of *Na-*

ture, and yet not broken off from the *Wild Olive*, or we be in the *State of Grace*, and now *engraffed* into that bleſſed and bleeding *Vine* the *Lord Jeſus*, Rom. 11. 17. The great *Apoſtle* doth earneſtly preſs us to the right doing of this *firſt* Duty, 2 Cor. 13. 5. where he uſeth a double Expreſſions, [πειράζετε and δοκιμάζετε,] that is, *Try your ſelves*, and *Prove your ſelves*; *know ye not* that *Chriſt is in you, except ye be Reprobates.* Wherein he alludeth both unto *Gold-ſmiths*, and unto *Lapidaries*, who have their *Lydius Lapis*, or Touch-ſtone, whereby they diſcover *true Gold* from that which is *Copper* or *Counterfeit*, and *Natural Diamonds* from *Artificial Briſtol-ſtones*. And thoſe double Terms of Art are to ſtir us up, that we may redouble our diligence in that moſt *needful* (yet much *neglected*) *Duty* of Self-examination; for tho' the *deciſive* and final Trial of our Eternal Eſtate doth immediately and ſolely appertain to God, in the Court of Heaven, yet the *Diſquiſitive*, and Soul-Comforting part doth belong to our ſelves in the Court of our own Conſciences. And therefore as an Omiſſion, or an Error here is moſt eaſie, ſo it is of moſt dangerous conſequence in filling our Spirits full of doubts and fears, what ſhall be

become of our Souls, when our Bodies drop down into the Grave. Hereupon the Divine Precept is doubled, both in this Apoſtles Charge, and in that of the *Prophets* alſo, [*Excutite vos, iterumque excutite,*] as *Tremellius* renders the words, *Zeph.* 2. 1.

The *Second Duty* is, That we ſhould make good proof of our Graces, eſpecially of that Foundation-grace of *Repentance unto Life*, as it is called *Acts* 11. 18. (*granted* unto us *Gentiles,*) for where right *Repentance towards God* is given, 'tis always accompanied with *faith toward our Lord Jeſus Chriſt*, Acts 20. 21. This Grace of *Repentance* is ſo exceeding neceſſary, that both our Lord himſelf, and his Forerunner, *John* the *Baptiſt*, began their Miniſtry with this indiſpenſable Doctrine, [*Repent*, for the *Kingdom of Heaven is at hand,*] Matth. 3. 2. and 4. 17. and Mark 1. 15. Join *Repent and Believe* both together. Now ſeeing the *Tree is known by its Fruit, whether it be good or bad*, Matth. 12. 33. Luke 6. 44. If we be no better than Bramble-Buſhes, no Grapes of Grace can grow upon us; but if we be *Trees of Righteouſneſs* of the Lord's *planting* and *watering*, as Iſai. 61. 3. then ſhall we *bring forth Fruits meet for Repentance*, Matth.

3. 8. Now the true Notion and Nature of this Grace of *Repentance* is, our *turning* from *Darkneſs* to *Light*, Acts 26. 18. and our returning from the faln Eſtate by the *firſt Adam* into a renewed Eſtate by the *Second Adam*: As we are all *Metaphorical Trees*. *Ariſtotle* calls Man *Arbor inverſa*, a Tree turned upward, making the Head as Root, and the Arms and Legs the Branches of this Tree, *&c.* *Bernard* calls Man [*Inverſus Decalogus*,] as quite contrary to God's Law, therefore muſt he be turned up-ſide down, as the Picture of the Horſe, and then right, *&c.* We have our *Standing Time* in our *Life*, and we muſt have our *Falling Time* at our *Death*; the *Ax whereof* is laid to the Root of us in thoſe manifold Diſtempers which attend Old Age, as if God were taking his Aim where to cut us up, and how to hew us down, Matth. 3. 10. Now as all Trees, be they ſtrong *Oakes*, or lofty *Cedars*, muſt have their time of falling; ſo all Mankind, be they of never ſo robuſt a Conſtitution, and be they of never ſo high, either of *State* or of *Stature*, muſt have a time of dying, *Heb.* 9. 27. and as Trees, what way they moſtly *lean*, that way they uſually fall, whether it be *Southward* or *Northward*, Eccleſ. 11. 3. So we ought to examine our ſelves, which way

way our *Wills* and *Affections* do lean, whether *Southward* towards the *Sun* of *Righteouſneſs*, Mal. 4. 2. As 'tis recorded of *Abraham*, (who *walked with God*) [that his *Journyings* were ſtill *towards* the *South*,] towards the Sun, *Gen.* 12. 9. So all the Sons and Daughters of *Abraham*, ſhould hang Heavenward, and ſhould lean *Southward*; then may there be good grounds of a *lively Hope*, that when we die, we ſhall fall upon the *Right-hand of Chriſt*, among the *fruitful Sheep*, and ſhall hear thoſe comfortable words, [*Come, ye bleſſed of my Father*, &c.] Matth. 25. 33, 34. But if on the other hand we do not find, that we have with *David*, [*conſidered our former evil ways*, and *turned our Feet* (our *Affections*) towards God's Teſtimonies,] Pſal. 119. 59. If yet we are not returned to God by *Repentance*, but are ſtill journying toward the *North*, towards that cold Country, where there is *weeping and wailing* and gnaſhing of Teeth for cold, (tho' it be a *fiery Furnace for heat*,] Matth. 13. 42, 50. If we lean *Northward*, and *hang Hellward*, we ſhall ſurely *fall* upon the *Left Hand* of the *Judge* among the *ſtinking Goats*, and receive that ſad Sentence, [*Depart ye Curſed*, &c.] Matth. 25. 41. As the Tree, where it falls,

North-

Northward or *Southward*, there it lies, *Eccleſ.* 11. 3. even ſo where we fall at our Deaths, whether *Northward*, upon the Left Hand of our Judge; or *Southward*, upon the Right Hand of our Redeemer, there we ſhall lie until the Reſurrection-day; for *after Death comes the Day of Judgment*, Heb. 9. 27. Then all both *good* and *bad* ſhall riſe again, *&c.*

The *Third Duty* of us *Aged Ones* is, Not to dally or delay that weighty Work of making our Peace with God, according to that Divine Counſel, [*Acquaint now thy ſelf with God, and be at Peace with him, and thereby good ſhall come unto thee,*] Job 22. 21. This great Duty muſt be *now* done, we have been aſleep, or Strangers to God long enough, *Epheſ.* 2. 12. and 4. 18. 1 *Pet.* 4. 3. *Now is the accepted time, now is the day of ſalvation*, 2 Cor. 6. 2. There be *Times of Grace*, while the Word of the Goſpel is preached to us; and there be *Seaſons of Grace*, when the Spirit of God goeth along with God's Word, and *convinceth of ſin*, &c. John 16. 8. Now ſuch a *ſeaſon* is the moſt beautiful part of time, and [how *can we eſcape if we neglect ſo great ſalvation!*] Heb. 2. 3. This is a *quenching the Spirit*, 1 Theſ. 5. 19. Opportunities are Headlong, and once loſt

and

and paſt, may never be recovered. Therefore doth God in Scripture ſo earneſtly preſs upon this [τὸ νῦν,] this *Now* or Time preſent, becauſe ſo many perſons are [*Semper Victuri,*] as *Seneca* ſaith, they promiſe to themſelves, that they ſhall yet live a little longer, ſaying, [*in Space will come Grace* ;] ſo they trifle out their Time, and puts off the making of their Peace with God for the *future*, and *future* their Duty ſo long, until at laſt they fool away their own Salvation ; whereas delays are dangerous, *qui non eſt hodie, cras minus aptus erit*, he that is not fit to day, will be leſs fit to morrow ; as the hinder Wheels of a Coach do purſue the former Wheels thereof all the day long, and tho' they be much larger than the other, and but at a very ſmall diſtance (of a yard or two) from them, yet they never overtake them : Even ſo it is in this caſe, *one delay* (of making our Peace with God) doth beget another from day to day, and the latter Promiſe of Repenting purſues the former from time to time, but never overtakes it ; [*Poſt eſt Occaſio Calva*, *Time* hath no Lock behind its Head for us to take hold of, whereby the hinder and the former part thereof may be made to meet together :

gether: And know, God will not always ſerve Men for a Sinning-ſtock from time to time; and as Dr. *Preſton* well obſerveth, that in theſe *Times of Grace*, the Lord is more *quick* and *Peremptory* in rejecting of ſuch as dally with the Tenders of Peace: God's time of tendering it, is ſhorter now, he will not wait ſo long, as he was wont to do, he will not ſuffer us to neglect it twice; but if once paſt, it will never dawn again. 'Tis true, [the *long-ſuffering* of *God is Salvation*,] Rom. 2. 4. and 2 Pet. 3. 15. but [*læſa patientia fit furor*,] if we preſume to abuſe God's Patience, then it turns into Fury, and we are but *treaſuring up to our ſelves wrath, againſt the day of wrath*, Rom. 2. 5. and therefore we ought to catch at preſent Opportunities; as *Millers* and *Mariners* do catch at preſent *Gales*, and make uſe of them when they come; and as *Watermen* take the opportunity of the *Tide*, all well-knowing, that neither *Wind*, nor *Tide*, nor *Time* will ſtay no Man's Leiſure or Pleaſure; they all are in *God's fiſt*, Prov. 30. 4. (who hath alone the Royalty of theſe his Creatures,) and not in the power of *Man*: We ought therefore to catch at the *Seaſon* of *Grace*, as we hear the *Echo* doth at the *Voice*, loudly ſpoken in

Places

Places of Reverberation, even in the very nick of Time. Thus we find *David* did, [*no ſooner had he heard God ſpeaking, [ſeek ye my Face,]* but immediately *his Heart* (being inſpired by the Spirit to a gracious compliance,) did (as it were) *eccho* back again, [*thy Face, Lord, will I ſeek,*] Pſal. 27. 8. And the like *Eccho*, or quick Anſwer we find in the *Church* to her *Lord*, who no ſooner had ſaid to her [*Return, ye back-ſliding Children, and I will heal your backſlidings*; She preſently Anſwers, [*Behold, we come unto thee, for thou art the Lord our God,*] Jer. 3. 22. The *Church* was thus moved to yield her ready Obedience unto her Lord's Command, becauſe [*the power of the Lord was preſent to heal her,*] as *Luke* 5. 17. And indeed every godly perſon hath, as it were, the *duplicate* and *counter-part* of *God's Law* written in his Heart, and is willingly caſt into the Mold of his Word, as *Rom.* 6. 17. may be read, to wit, [*ye have obeyed from the heart,* that Form, (*Type* or *Mold*) *of Doctrine into which ye were caſt.*] The Doctrine of the Goſpel is the *Mold*, and the Hearts of Hearers is the Mettal, which when ſufficiently melted in the Furnace, being purged from the Droſs, *&c.* is then poured into the Mold, and willingly receiveth

veth that *Form* and *Figure* of that *Type* or *Veſſel* that it is caſt into, taking Impreſſion from it in one part as well as another, and receives its Form in the whole. Oh that it may be ſo with us, to *acquaint now our ſelves with God*, while he calls us, and be at *peace with him*: This is done, if we return to God ſpeedily by Repentance from whom we have ſo ſhamefully *revolted*, and againſt whom we have ſo notoriouſly *rebelled*; our *Lord* calleth loudly upon us, duly and daily, [*To day if you will hear his Voice, harden not your Hearts,*] Pſal. 95. 7, 8. Heb. 3. 7, 8. as in the *day of Provocation*. It muſt be *done to day*, while the *Gales* of *Grace* continue blowing and breathing; 'tis the Cry of that unclean Bird, the Crow, [*Cras, Cras,*] that is, to *Morrow*, to *Morrow* will be ſoon enough. If we harden our own Hearts by Unbelief, as our *choice* to day, God may lay Hardneſs of Heart upon us, as our Judgment to *morrow*; ſo that neither *Miniſtry*, nor *Miſery*, nor *Miracle*, nor *Mercy* may poſſibly *Mollifie* them.

But on the other hand, if the Lord move our Hearts, to make ſuch a *quick Eccho*, and gracious Anſwer to God's Call and Command, as *Samuel* did by the Inſtruction of Good Old *Eli*, [*ſpeak, Lord,*

for

for thy Servant now heareth,] 1 Sam. 3. 9, 10. and as *Saul* ſaid, [*Lord, what wilt thou have me to do?*] Acts 9. 6. This is a bleſſed evidence, that God hath [*bored our Ears,*] and we ſhall ſay then, [*Lo, we come to do thy will, O God,* and we *delight in doing it,*] Pſal. 40. 6, 7, 8. *Chriſt's people are willing in the day of Chriſt's power,* Pſal. 110. 3. they then will *make haſte and not delay,* Pſal. 119. 59, 60. yea, it ſhould be our *Meat* and *Drink* to *do God's Will,* as it was to *our Lord,* Joh. 4. 34. Now if we can but find any promptneſs in our Wills and Affections to turn our Hearts from ſin, and return to God *without delays,* we ſhall then *be at peace with him,* and *be with us*; yea, and *thereby good ſhall come unto us,* Job. 22. 21. *we ſhall be happy,* and it ſhall be *well with us,* Pſal. 128. 2. We ſhall have a *Cornucopia,* even a *confluence* of all manner of contentments and comforts, even *good Temporal, good Spiritual* and *good Eternal*; then *Peace will be within our Walls,* and *Proſperity within our Tabernacles,* Pſal. 122. 7. To conclude this Point, if *we,* who are *Aged,* have delayed hitherto to *make our peace with God,* we have burnt Day-light too much already, 'tis high time to uſe expedition. The putting off of this day, and the next, and half

half a day, cost the *Levite* very dear, *Judg.* 19, 7, 8, *&c.* As that *Old Man* courted and cozened that *Levite*, so *Satan* cozens us when we have a mind to look towards Heaven; our Foe, saying to us, [*be content*, I pray you, *&c.* what haste, hereafter is soon enough, *&c.*] but we must be peremptory, *for the Evening hasteth on us a-pace*, &c. and God forbid we should go *to Bed* (the Grave) at last, without saving Light, when the *night of Death* cometh on us.

The *Fourth Duty* of all Aged Ones is, seriously to consider the many wearisom Evils, which *Old Age* is now about to bring upon us, whereof *Solomon* giveth a particular description of, after he had stiled *Old Age* an *Evil Age* in the general, *Eccles.* 12. 1. Then he proceedeth to describe more distinctly what those *decays* of Nature in Old Persons be, which make their days so evil and unpleasant, *ver.* 2, *to* 7. and these be of three sorts of *Infirmities.*

First, Some such as do befall the *former part* of *Old Age*, while as yet we are able to go abroad, *ver.* 2. to the former part of *ver.* 5.

Secondly, Other *Decays* that attend our *Decrepid Old Age*, when Death is very near approaching to us, and our selves are draw-

drawing fast toward it, in the latter part of *ver.* 5, with *ver.* 6, 7.

Thirdly and *Lastly*, He describes *Death* it self, *ver.* 7. All this distinct description doth the *wisest of Men* leave upon Divine Record, that it might the more awaken us to *work out our Salvation with fear and trembling*, Phil. 2. 12. *to make our Calling and Election sure*, 2 Pet. 1. 10. That we all may with all expedition make sure work for a better World, before we go hence to be seen no more.

Now the *Decays* of Old Age, in its *former part*, whilst as yet we are able to walk abroad; be,

(1st) The *Darkness* of all the Lights that are about us, whether they be *Natural*, as of the *Sun*, *Moon* and *Stars*, &c. or *Artificial Lights*, such as *Candles*, *Torches*, &c. This *Darkness* cometh not not from any *Decay* of those Lights, but from the *Dimness* of our own Sight; hence cometh our need of Spectacles, *&c.* It implies also, that all the *comforts* and and contentments which we formerly enjoyed in our Younger Years, are now turned into *Discomforts*, into Diseases, Aches and Pains, which darken greater and lesser Comforts. We then *see through a Glass Darkly*, as the *Apostle* saith in another case. 1 *Cor.* 13. 12. The destucti-

on of Rheum, which trickleth down the Cheeks, (I here ſpeak my own experience) doth continually diſtil it ſelf out of the Head, and as it were [the returning *of the Clouds after* the Rain,] *ver.* 2. as it falls out in our *April* weather, no ſooner is one Shower unburdened, but another is Brewed, much more in the Winter of Old Age: And thus likewiſe [*Deep calleth upon Deep, at the noiſe of the Water-ſpouts,*] Pſal. 42. 7. that is, one Affliction comes upon the Neck of another without intermiſſion, like the Billows of the Sea, that come rolling and tumbling one after another; yea, and like *Job*'s Meſſengers, that haſtened with their evil Tidings to him, ſo as that they were even ready to tread upon the Heels one of another. Thus it falls out more eſpecially where *Old Age* is the *Succeſſor*, and *a wild wanton Youth* hath been its *Predeceſſor*, from whence many a violent Storm hath been long battering and beating upon this Houſe of Clay: So that if the Saddle be ſet upon the right Horſe, we ought to blame the *Vanity* (if not *Villany*) of our *Youth*, for all the Sorrows and Infirmities, yea *ſufferings* in our *Old Age*.

The *(2d) Decay* that *Solomon* ſaith attendeth *Old Age*, of the firſt Rank or Degree

Degree is, *ver.* 3. that *the Keepers of the House shall Tremble*, to wit, the *Arms* and *Hands* which are our defence for the Head and whole Body, (called an *House* oft in Scripture,) from any harm impending upon us, for maintaining our Lives, which are therefore called *the Lives of our Hands*, Isai. 57. 10. because *our* Lives are upheld by the labour of our Hands; but alas how little labour can the trembling Hands of Old Age (which oft brings *Palsies*, and other weaknesses) accomplish. Thus the *Preacher* doth Draw to the Life the very *Picture* of *Old Age*, and most elegantly continueth, and carries on this *Mystical Allegory*, adding here the

(3*d*) *Decay*, [The *Strong Men shall bow themselves*,] that is, the *Legs* and *Thighs* shall then begin to bend and buckle in the Knees, cripling and crinkling under us; so that they sometimes be unable to bear the burden of the Body; insomuch that one of the five Characters of Old Persons is, to have a *Leg in their Hand*, to support their feeble and tottering Tabernacles (the Body) therewith; they stand in need of a Staff or Crutch: Hence *Hesiod* calls them τρίποδας, which signifies [*Three Legg'd:*] And *Virgil's* Phrase is, *Genua Labant*, the Knees do languish, &c. And,

Membra levant Baculis Tardique Senilibus Annis.

Slow-paced Seniors ſtay up their Sides with Staves in their Hands.

The *(4th) Decay* in this *Allegory* and Alluſion is, [the *Grinders ſhall ceaſe*, becauſe they *are few*,] that is, the *Teeth* ſhall then be unable to chew any Meat, becauſe they are either *looſe* or loſt with Age; for as Teeth come not with us into the World when we are born, ſo they commonly leave us in Old Age, before we leave the World when we die. And this is another of the five Characters of Old Perſons, that they *wear their Teeth at their Girdle*, to wit, the Knife that is ſtuck there, to be drawn at the Table out of its Sheath, for ſhredding their Meat very ſmall with it, and make Food fit for manducation; becauſe Meat muſt be well maſticated, (before it be tranſmitted into the Stomach) for a more mature Digeſtion: And *Teeth* are as hard as *Stones*, therefore are they fitly compared to *Milſtones* for their Grinding-work, as they are called *Grinders* here. Hereupon *Juvenal* wittily alludeth,

Frangendos miſero Gingiva Panis Incrmi.

which

which is in Engliſh, 'Tis *a miſery to Old People, that they muſt break their Bread with Toothleſs Gums.*

The *(5th) Decay* is, [when *thoſe that look out at the Windows are darkened,*] that is, the *Eyes* grown dim or blind as they did in Old *Iſaac*, Gen. 27. 1, *&c.* who could not diſcern a difference betwixt his two Sons, *Eſau* and *Jacob*, &c. and as they did alſo in Old *Jacob*, [*whoſe Eyes were dim for Age,*] Gen. 48. 10, &c. Where good *Joſeph* thought that his Father *Jacob* had made ſuch a miſtake of *Ephraim* for *Manaſſeh*, as his Grandfather *Iſaac* had done before, through his dimneſs of Eyes, in his bleſſing *Jacob*, the Younger, for *Eſau*, the Elder, *&c.* This dimneſs of Sight is aſſuredly a very heavy affliction, *ver.* 3. which is a degree of Darkneſs, higher than that which is mentioned in *ver.* 2. when our very Spectacles are become helpleſs to us. But 'tis the greateſt Affliction to ſuch as have had their *Eyes full of Adultery*, 2 Pet. 2. 14. becauſe in that caſe *our ſin* is writ upon *our Puniſhment*; and our own guilty Conſciences do put a Sting into that Darkneſs upon our Windows of Wantonneſs and Wickedneſs. This muſt needs be a Prick and a Thorn to torment Blind Eyes.

The *Sixth Evil* of Old Age is, [and *the Doors ſhall be ſhut in the Streets*, when the *ſound* of the Grinding is low,] *ver.* 4. which *ſome interpret* the *Ears*, that then grow dull of Hearing, and at laſt *Deaf*; becauſe *Hearing* is cauſed by two Bones, placed within the inſide of the *Ear*; whereof the one ſtands ſtill, and the other moveth like the nether and upper Grindſtones of a Mill: And as the *Ear* was a *Door*, by which *Death* firſt entred into the World, when our firſt Parents gave a liſtning Ear, more to the Old Lyar, than to the God of Truth. So the Lord hath appointed it as a ſuitable *Antidote*, that the *Ear* ſhould be a *Door* to let in *Life and Salvation* now, as it had done *Death* and *Damnation* before; for God ſaith in the *Old Teſtament*, [*incline your Ear to me, hear, and your Soul* ſhall live, *&c.*] Iſai. 55. 3. And he ſaith in the *New Teſtament*, [that *Faith cometh by Hearing*, &c. Rom. 10. 17. But alas, the *Deaf cannot hear the* word, the Door is ſhut, yea, the *Young* as well as *Old*, while in the ſtate of Sin, all are poſſeſſed with a *Deaf Devil*, until *Chriſt* come and cry *Ephphatha*, that is, *be opened*, Mark. 7. 34. and *ſtraightway his Ears* were *opened*, ver. 35.

But

But *others do understand* those *Metaphorical Doors* in *Eccles.* 12. 4. to be the Lips of Man's Mouth, because of *David*'s expression in his Prayer, [*Lord, keep the Door of my Lips*, &c.] Psal. 141. 3. These Doors, the Lips, are said to be *shut without*, because the *sound of the Grinding is low*, that is, (say they) the Lips are shut close together, when for want of Teeth to grind their Food with, the Meat is rolled and chavelled up and down the Mouth; and if the Lips be not kept close shut, the Meat, in tumbling to and fro, would drop out of the Mouth.

There is yet a *Third Interpretation* of this *Allusion* (which I cannot omit) of those words, [The Doors shall be shut in the Streets,] that is, these Aged Ones shall keep home, avoiding the company and society of Mankind, such as Feastings and Merry Meetings, [*when the sound of the Grinding is low*,] that is, when neither his Teeth, nor his Stomach and Appetite can any longer serve him for much feeding or feasting, as in Old *Barzillai*, 2 Sam. 19. 35.

The *(7th) Decay* in Old Age is, [*and he shall rise at the Voice of the Bird*,] that is, the least noise of a *Swallow* that nests in the Chimney top, *&c.* or any little Bird will waken Old Persons, espe-

cially the *crowing* of the *Cock*, which is not cauſed by any quickneſs in their Hearing, (that then is *dull*, as before,) but from the *dryneſs* of their *Brains*, which cauſeth badneſs of ſleeping, from coldneſs of Blood, and deficiency of Moiſture; therefore is it ſaid, [the *Old Man riſes up at the leaſt Noiſe*,] becauſe being awakened, and weary with lying along, and unable to turn his Body in his Bed, he muſt *riſe* to change his poſture, for his eaſe, *&c.*

The *(8th) Evil* of *Old Age* is, [*all the Daughters of Muſick ſhall be brought low*], that is, they ſhall neither have any *Voices* wherewith to ſing of themſelves, nor take any delight to hear others (that have Voices) to ſing, *ver.* 4. for as their Inſtruments of Speaking, (which make Muſick) do fail, ſo their Inſtruments of Hearing, (for receiving Muſick) do fail alſo. *Homer* obſerveth, that Old People cannot themſelves ſing, [*Propter Raucam Vocem*,] for their unpleaſant Voice, which is no better than Creaking and Screaming. And *Juvenal* expreſſeth it thus, [*nam quæ Cantante Voluptas*,] what pleaſure can the Old find, either in ſinging themſelves, or in hearing others ſing? as they themſelves cannot ſing Tuneably with diſtinction of Sounds, ſo they can take

take no delight in hearing the Melodious Notes of other Singers, as Old *Barzillai* did acknowledge to King *David*, (who was that *ſweet Singer of Iſrael*,) 2 Sam. 19. 35. As their dulneſs of Hearing diſinables them from diſcerning the Melody; ſo the lowneſs of their Spirits makes them melancholick, inſomuch that they cannot affect Muſick: And this is very remarkable here, that Old Men, whoſe Hearing is ſo quick, as to be awakenned with any little Noiſe of a Bird, *&c.* yet the exquiſiteneſs of the ſenſe of Hearing (to delight in the ſound of Muſick) is quite gone from them.

The *(9th) Evil* of *Old Age*, [*they ſhall be afraid of that which is high, and fear ſhall be in the way,*] ver. 5. that is, they ſhall be very fearful to walk upon high places, where there may be any danger of falling; and they being very timerous themſelves, will ſhrink and tremble, yea cry out, when they behold Young Ones over bold and venturous, *&c.* As they are themſelves afraid of climbing up aloft, becauſe of the ſtiffneſs of their Joints, and the unweildineſs of their Bodies. So they dare not ſtand in any high place, becauſe a *Vertigo*, a giddineſs or ſwimming of the Brain doth ſoon ſeize upon them. Their *Heads* are as weak as

their

their *Hamms*, they can neither climb up, becauſe they are ſhort winded; and when they are got up, they dare not look down for fear of falling, *&c.* Yea, they are afraid of every Hillock, or little Stone ſtanding up in their way, for fear of ſtumbling on it, becauſe of the unnimbleneſs of their Limbs. They fear to be caſt down by careleſs People, riding or running, and carrying Burdens to and fro, *&c.*

The *(10th) Evil* of *Old Age* is, [*the Almond Tree* then flouriſheth,] that is, when their *Heads grow Gray and Hoary*, which is of it ſelf a *Crown of Glory*, (a flouriſhing Ornament) *if found in the way of Righteouſneſs*, Prov. 16. 31. But it is an undeniable evidence of the decay of our Radical Moiſture, which ſhould duly nouriſh the Hairs, both of our Heads and Beards. The *Almond Tree* is the firſt that flouriſheth, *Jer.* 1. 11, 12. The *Prophet* there ſaw this as a *ſign* of Gods haſtning the execution of his Judgments againſt a ſinful Nation; for this *Tree Bloſſometh before any other Tree. Natural Philoſophy* tells us, that the *Almond Tree* doth *Bloſſom* in *January*, while it is yet *Winter*, and its *Fruit* is *ripe* in *March*, when 'tis but early *Spring*, &c. and therefore it hath its Name from its early appearance both of *Buds*, *Bloſſoms* and

and *Fruit*; but here it is made a Reſemblance of an *Hoary Head*, yet with this difference,

(1ſt) The *Almond* flouriſheth in the *Spring*, but the *Hoary Head* in the *Winter* of our *Old Age*.

(2dly) That *Tree* hath all its white Bloſſoming Flowers before the Fruit, but we have our *white Hairs* after our Fruit-bearing to God in our Generation-work. Notwithſtanding this double *Diſparity*, there is this one *Congruity* that runs parallel betwixt them, namely, that the *Hoary Head found in the way of Righteouſneſs*, is the *flouriſhing Crown* of the *Old Man*, in the Spring of a better World, unto which he is haſtening with *white Snow*, or *Church-yard Flowers* upon his Head. This makes up another of the five Characters afore-mentioned, that *Old Age hath White Sugar* in its Hair, as it is *Gray-headed*, &c.

The *(11th) Evil* of *Old Age* is, [*then the Graſhopper or Locuſt ſhall be a Burden*,] that is, the *Old Man* cannot bear the leaſt Weight or Burden, no not the Weight or Burden of a *Locuſt* or *Graſhopper*, becauſe he is already become a *Burden* to himſelf, by manifold Diſtempers upon him, as *Gout*, *Phthiſick*, &c. But another learned Expoſitor in-

interprets this Clauſe, neither by the *noiſe* of the *Locuſt*, (for that is intimated before, *ver.* 4. in the *Voice of the Bird*,) nor by its *weight*, Hyperbolically ſpoken, to ſignifie that the lighteſt Burden is a Load to Old People; but moſt fitly, (as he ſaith) it is meant of the *ſlowneſs* of the Aged's digeſtion: For tho' the *Locuſt* be a *clean* and wholeſom Food, *Levit.* 11. 22. and much uſed in thoſe Hot Countries, eſpecially by the poorer ſort of People, *Matth.* 3. 4. yet even this *Light Meat* proves heavy and burdenſome to the *Old Man*'s Stomach.

The (12*th*) *Evil* of *Old Age* is, that [*then Deſire ſhall fail*,] that is, not only Appetite either to Meat or to Drink, (as was in *Barzillai* afore-named, but alſo all vehement and ſtrong Affections to the common Pleaſures of this Life, (called the *Delights of the Sons of Men*, Eccleſ. 2. 8.) ſuch as are the *Luſts* of the *Fleſh*, the *Luſts* of the *Eye*, and the *Pride* of *Life*, all theſe ſhall be taken away, *&c.* Hence famous *Tully* reckons this as one great Benefit by Old Age, [*quod Hominem a libidinis æſtu, velut a quodam Tyranno liberabit*,] that it ſets a Man free from the Fire and Flagrancy of Luſt, as from a great Tyrant. And this alſo implied in that *Etymology* of [περεσβύτης,] (which

(which signifies an *Elder*,) derived from [πῦρ,] *ignis*, and [σβέω,] *extinguo*, to wit, the *Quenching of Fire*.

Thus far go the *First sort* of *Evils*, attending the former part of Old Age, while we are yet able to walk abroad, now follow the *Second Sort* that do accompany our *Decrepit Age*, which are the symptoms and forerunners of approaching Death; and then it is that we are said to have *one Foot in the Grave*. There is yet one of the *Five Characters* behind, to be now mentioned, namely, the *Old Man* hath also an *Almanack* in his Bones, (as well as *Eyes*) (or Spectacles *in his Pocket*,) a *Leg* (or *Staff*) *in his Hand*, *Sugar* or *Snow* in his *Hoary Head*, and *Teeth* or Knife at his Girdle.) Now this *Almanack* is, the many Aches and Pains all over his Body, which makes him *Weather-wise*, and wiser than his *Almanack*, and can better prognosticate that *ill weather* is near at hand, when he begins to feel many pungent pricking Pains, infesting the Humours of several parts of his Body; the like Prognosticks (as the *Lord Bacon*, in his *Natural History*, telleth us) are found in some certain *Weather-wise* Fowls, which against stormy Seasons will make most doleful Ditties, and sad Outcries: and the Reason hereof, (as

that

that learned *Nobleman* rendreth it) is, becauſe then the purified Air penetrates into the Quils of their Feathers, which puts them to much Anguiſh, and cauſeth them to cry out after an hiddious manner. Thus it is with us, in our Decrepid Age, ſuch Cramps and Convulſions do come upon us, as do foretel the *Storm* of *Death* is drawing nigh, and that we are *going apace to our long home*, Eccleſ. 12. 5. And therefore the *Moral* of the *Apologue* is very weighty, and well worthy of ſerious conſideration. The *Story* in the *Fable* runs thus, [There was a Man, who made this Bargain with *Death*, not to come for taking away his Life, and ſending him away into another World, until he had due notice and warning hereof before hand. *Death* agrees, and the Bargain was ſtruck up between them both. After this the Man liveth a long time, yet not altogether without ſome *Ailments* and *Illments*; all ſtanding memorials of Mortality: At the laſt *Death* comes in good earneſt, as *God's Sergeant* to Arreſt him, and to carry him to the Priſon of the Grave. Nay (ſaith the *Man to Death*) Hold now thy Hand, for I muſt bind thee to thy Bargain, wherein thou bound thy ſelf to give me timely notice, and due warning of thy coming. To this

Death

Death ſmartly replied, [*Oh Man*, how many Harbingers haſt thou had concerning my coming, in thoſe ſundry Diſtempers of *Tooth-ach*, *Head-ach*, and ſuch like; all which were my Forerunners, but thou minded them not;] therefore [*Thou Fool*, at this Time *thy Soul ſhall be required of thee*,] as *Luke* 12. 20. whereupon *Death* caſt his fatal *Javeling* at him, ſtruck him down dead, and hurried him away to his place in another World. The *Moral* of this Myſtical *Fable* is this, That even all the Infirmities of the Firſt Sort, namely, not only the *Five Characters of Old Age* fore-mentioned, with all the other *Decays* of Nature, which the Eldeſt Son of Wiſdom, *Solomon*, recordeth, *Eccleſ.* 12. 1, 2, 3, 4, 5. they are all Summons ſent from Heaven to us, that we may be *making ready* for our departure from this Earth: But more eſpecially thoſe of this *latter Sort*, which do more immediately introduce *Death* it ſelf. The two Firſt whereof be *external*, in the laſt of part *ver.* 5. As,

(*1ſt*) *Man* is juſt a *going to his long Home*, Gnal Beth Gnalamo, *Hebrew*, the Houſe of his Age, the Grave, where he ſhall reſt until the Day of his Reſurrection, *Job* 14. 12. Now the Sentence of Death is ſeen by many indicant Signs, to

be

writ upon him, as 2 *Cor.* 1. 9. and he lies ſighing out thoſe ſad words of *Job*, [*My Spirit is ſpent, my Days are extinct, the Graves are ready for me,*] Job 17. 1.

(2dly) The *Mourners go about the Streets*, that is, his Friends and Neighbours run to ſee him die, and to cloſe up his Eyes, making many mournful Moans and Lamentations over him, to provoke others to lament with them, *Amos* 5. 16. and *Jer.* 22. 18. This is one of the *dues of the Dead*, ſo it be done aright. The Four following *Decays* are *Internal*, ver. 6. in the very Act of Dying, namely, the diſſolution, and periſhing of thoſe principal parts, wherein the life and ſtrength of Nature do inwardly conſiſt. As,

(1ſt) Or [*ever the Silver Cord be looſed,*] that is, the *Marrow* of the *Back-Bone*, which runneth from the Brain through the Neck, to the bottom of the Back through twenty four Joints, and takes in therewith all the *Sinews* of the other parts of the Body, and which are the Ligaments of all the Members. Now as this *Marrow* is of a Silver Colour, and is therefore called [a *Silver Cord*;] ſo as it is a *Cord* that *ties* all the whole Body together: Now when this *Cord* comes to looſened, the Back bendeth, Motion becometh ſlow, and Feeling daily faileth, *&c.* *(2dly)*

(2*dly*) [*Or the Golden Bowl be broken*,] that is, the *Heart*, (as ſome ſenſe it) which is the *primum Vivens, & ultimum Moriens*, the *firſt* that *Lives*, and the *laſt* that *Dies*; therefore is it called the *Fort-Royal of Life*: Or the *Pericardium* about the Heart; which the *Soldier pierced* with his Spear in our *Saviour's ſide*, from whence there came forth *Blood and Water*, John 19. 34. and 1 John 5. 6. But others do interpret it to be rather the *Head* or Skull, called the *Brain-pan*, for the Brains are contained within the *Meninges* thereof; and the *Piamater* covereth them like a Swathing Cloth, or the inner Rind of a Tree, as in a Cup or Bowl; and a wound in this is ever mortal. Now the *Hebrew* word here, being the ſame with *Golgotha*, which ſignifies a *Skull*, 2 Kings 9. 35. Matth. 27. 33. and Judg. 9. 53.) all this make the *latter* Interpretation the more probable; for when Death comes with his Javelin or Dart to wound the Brain-pan, or *Skull*, (which is round like a Cup or Bowl, and is called here *Golden*, becauſe of its colour,) then the Sutures or Seams of the Skull are parted aſunder; from whence it comes to paſs, that the Chaps of Dying Perſons do fall, and the Almonds of their Ears are ſtopped, *&c.* Oh what cauſe have we

break forth into *David*'s words, saying, [*We are wonderfully framed,*] Psal. 139. 14. If the pretious Office of this *Golden Bowl* for preserving the Brain, *&c.* be well considered.

(3dly) [Or the *Pitcher be broken at the Fountain,*] that is, either the *Veins* at the *Liver*, (as some say) which is the Shop of Sanguification or Blood-making; those Veins carry Blood from the Liver into all parts of the Body by way of Circulation, *&c.* Or as others understand it, the *Arteries* which carry Spirits from the Heart, and conveys Nourishment, Sense and Motion from one part to another, *&c.* There is yet a Third Sense put upon this *Pitcher*, that is, the *Bladder* is broken at the Spring of Water or Urin, *&c.* Now as when either the *Veins* at the Liver, especially the *Vena Cava*, *&* *Vena Porta*, (as the *Anatomists* name them,) or the *Arteries* at the Heart, do come once to lose their drawing, and distributing Office and Vertue, then the Body doth immediately decay, *&*. even so, when the Muscle at the Neck of the Bladder comes to be broken, and loseth its Retentive Faculty, then the Water (or Urin) doth run insensibly from a Dying Person without stay.

(4thly) [Or the *Wheel is broken at the Cistern,*] that is, according to the Sentiments

ments of ſome Expoſitors, the *Head* which draweth all the Operations of Life from the Heart; and hence it is, that when any dreadful *Fright* is apprehended by our Heads, and ſuddenly doth ſurprize us, we preſently are ſtruck with a *Paleneſs*, becauſe all the Blood in our Faces doth run back to the *Heart*, as to the *Fountain* of Life, *&c.* But others are of *opinion*, [that by this *Wheel broken at the Ciſtern*] muſt be meant, the *Lungs broken* off from their double Office, and Motion of *Inſpiration*, and *Reſpiration*; and this Breaking or Obſtruction is cauſed by *Phlegmn* from the *Stomach*, which is as a *Ciſtern* from all parts of the Body, *&c.* The *Lungs* are as a *Wheel*, tranſmitting the Air in and out, by a Motion up and down, like to that of a pair of Bellows, which Men learnt to make from the poſture and operations of *Mens Lungs* that were of *God's making*; and thus indeed Man learns all other Artifices from God, the great Artificer: *God inſtructs the Husbandman*, Iſai. 28. 26. and *all others* alſo. Now tho' there be no open Paſſage betwixt the *Stomach* and the *Lungs*, and (therefore there is no ordinary purging of the Lungs, but upwards, by ſpitting and coughing;) yet when the *Stomach* is overcharged with *Phlegm*, the former diſtil-

leth the latter into the Lungs, and thereby ſtoppeth them in their Motion. This may be exemplified thus, when a Man or Beaſt is dead, there ſeemeth no way of entrance for *Water* into the Bladder, no not ſo much as for any Air; for if we blow the Bladder full of Wind, none of it will iſſue out; and yet while Life laſteth in the Body, both *Water* and *Sand* doth paſs through little Veins (called *Valvulas*) into the *Bladder*; even ſo by ſome ſuch like ſecret paſſages, doth the *Ciſtern* of the *Stomach* convey *Phlegm* into the *Lungs*, yea ſometimes to the very *ſtifling* of them; and upon this ſtoppage of the Lungs with Phlegm ſo, that the *Wheel* cannot *turn the Air* (or *breath*) *up and down*, and in and out to the Noſtrils: Then from this obſtruction of the *Lobes*, (whereof the Lungs do conſiſt) ſo that their Motion, like a pair of broken Bellows, is broken off; then followeth the *Rutling in the Throat*, which is the common *Herauld*, proclaiming that *Death* is at *Hand*, &c. *NB. Note well*, How *Solomon* (the Eldeſt Son of Wiſdom) hath left upon Record in *Eccleſ.* 12. a moſt ſublime Lecture of *Anatomy*, as well as of *Divinity*, in his Diſſection of the infirm *Body* of *Old Age*, which he ſweetly ſetteth forth by a continued *Al-*

legory,

legory [*Ubi quot Lumina, imo Flumina Orationis,*] that is, *containing* ſo many *Lights*, yea and Floods of Eloquence; and all this *Solomon* did, not ſo much to demonſtrate his own excellent Skill, and unparallel'd Prudence, but more eſpecially and principally to inſtruct, yea and to provoke all Mankind to become wiſe unto Salvation, and to *remember our Creator early*, before any of theſe *Evils of Old Age* come upon us, *&c.*

CHAP. VIII.

Counsel and Comfort to Young and Old, against the Evils of Old Age, the Fear of Death, and the Terror of the Day of Judgment.

THIS *Eight Chapter* consists as well of Comforts (as of Counsel) against the *Evils of Old Age*, against the *Fear* of *Death*, and against the *Terror* of the *Day* of *Judgment*.

First, The *Comforts* against the *Evils* of *Old Age*: 'Tis a *Time desired* by all, (who are they that would not live long, *&c?*) but 'tis welcomed by few, because of the *Burden* of Distempers that it brings along with it, *&c.* If God bless us to live up to Old Age, we ought not to complain of it, for 'tis a *blessing* we must bless God for, [*Length of days is from the Right Hand, Riches and Honour from the Left*, Prov. 3. 16. And God promised

miſed to his *Jeruſalem* after its Reſtoration, [that there ſhould *be Old Men and Old Women in the Streets of it, with Staves in their Hands,*] Zech. 8. 4. yea and it was *God's Curſe* upon the Houſe of *Ely*, [that *not any that were Old ſhould be found in it,*] 1 Sam. 2. 32. Therefore if God do ſtill preſerve the rotten Thread of our Lives, and draw it out to laſt ſo long, and yet the Clue have a little more Yarn upon the Botton; Oh how thankfully ought we to *welcome* this Gueſt of Gods own ſending, and not to complain of it as our great Burden, but entertain it chearfully with God-praiſing hearts! 'Tis true, tho' *Old Age* be a rich Bleſſing of God in it ſelf, (as is largely demonſtrated before) and yet is called an *Evil Age*, for Reaſons afore-named. Notwithſtanding, *God hath not left it comfortleſs*, as 'tis ſaid, *John* 14. 18. But the *Spirit* (who is the *Comforter*, hath left upon Scripture-Record ſo many *Cordials*, as are truly *Soveraign* againſt all the *Evils* that attend it; inſomuch as *Old Age* may be an *eaſie Age*, a calm and quiet Harbour, if *Youth* hath done it no diſſervice in *filling* its *bones with* the *ſins of Youth* beforehand; and if Intemperance (which is like the Thief in the Candle, waſting

it away) hath not weakned its Head or Feet, *&c.* In this caſe *Old Age* hath cauſe to complain of the *evil* of the *Man*, and not the *Man* to murmure at the *Evils of Old Age.* Thus *Old Job* oft complains of the Miſery of his Old Age, ſaying, [*Lord, thou changeſt our Countenances*, and *ſendeſt us away*,] Job 14. 20. and many myriads of *ſuch Sighs*, (too long to relate) do ever and anon iſſue out of his Mouth. And he himſelf tells us, the ground of all his grief was, [*that God made him to poſſeſs the ſins of his Youth*] Job 13. 26. therefore (ſays he) *thou writeſt bitter things againſt me*, &c. Thus likewiſe *Old David* complained, [*I am become like a Bottle in the Smoak*,] Pſal. 119. 83. and much more in many other *Pſalms*, &c. which drove him to groan out that Petition, [*Lord, remember not againſt me the Tranſgreſſions of my Youth*, for *thy tender Mercies have been of old*, &c. Pſal. 25. 6, 7. Both thoſe *Inſtances* were Holy Perſons, who after thoſe and many more ſuch Complaints, were (both of them) *comforted* by the *God of all Comforts*, 2 Cor. 1. 3. and had their *Old Age* marvelouſly ſweetned to them, and had their *beſt Wine*

at

at the laſt. both thoſe Good Men had *remembred their Creator in the days of their Youth*, Eccleſ. 12. 1. and tho' their *Youth-Time* had been a very rough Voyage through a ſurging ſtormy Sea, yet their *laſt Years* were their *beſt Years*, as it was to *Good Old Jacob*, who after a long Life of manifold Miſeries, did enjoy *ſeventeen* Years of ſweet Tranquility and Comfort, *&c.* But alas, this *Mercy* can never be expected by thoſe who never *had God*, neither in their *Heads*, Pſal. 10. 4. nor in their *Hearts*, Pſal. 14. 1. nor in their *Words*, Pſal. 12. 4. no nor in their *Works*, Tit. 1. 16. and ſuch as drive a *Through-Trade* all their Lives in Weaving the Web of Wickedneſs, having been *twice dipped* in the Devils Dye-Tub, (as the Greek word [Δίβαφον,] for *Scarlet Sins*, doth ſignifie,) namely, in the *Wool* of their *Youth*, and in the *Web* of their *Elder Years*; thoſe can never expect any comfort in *Old Age*. *Pliny* tells us, [*Serpens, Serpentem devorans, fit Draco,*] as that Serpent, which commonly devoureth other Serpents, becomes to be a *Dragon* at laſt: So a long ſwallower of many Sins, becomes at the

the length a moſt Monſtrous Sinner, *&c.* that Old and true ſaying, [that if Perſons prove not *Fair* at twenty, *Strong* at thirty, *Wiſe* at forty, *Rich* at fifty, and *Religious* at ſixty Years of Age, ſuch will never prove either *Fair*, or *Strong*, or *Wiſe*, or *Wealthy*, or *Holy Ones* all the days of their Lives.] This ancient *Adage* holds a moſt apt congruity with that ſaying of *Solomon*, [*ſuch as ſeek me early, ſhall find me*,] Prov. 8. 17. Whereas the *Habitual Sinner*, (to whom God hath given the *Space* of Repentance many times, but never the *Grace* of it, *Rev.* 2. 21, 23.) leads the Life of ſin: *Thoughts* beget *Delight*, *Delight* begets *Conſent*, *Conſent* begets *Action*, *Action* begets *Cuſtom*, and laſtly, *Cuſtom* begets *Neceſſity*; ſo that he brings himſelf under a Law of an unavoidable Sinning againſt his maker, and as *David* tells *Saul*, [*wickedneſs proceedeth from the wicked*, as *naturally* as *Water from the Fountain*,] 1 Sam. 24. 13. Satan is not ſatisfied to have Men *Sinners* only, but he will have them alſo to abound in ſin, and to be like the *Crocodile* (that grows while it lives,) in growing greater

ter and groſſer Sinners to the end of their Lives; Alas, this is but the *laying* of a bad (and not a *good*) *foundation for the time to come:* As we are commanded to *lay up a better ſtore* againſt *Old Age and Death*, and to *lay hold on Eternal Life*, 1 Tim. 6. 19. *NB. Note well*, Our Lord tells *Peter* what *Miſeries* he ſhould *meet withal* when he *came to be Old*, John 21. 18. He had the manner of his Death foretold him, that he ſhould *glorifie* God by Martyrdom, *ver.* 19. and obſerve what an holy Improvement he made of this Precaution; he had made his Solemn Appeal to an All-knowing Lord, ſaying, [*thou knoweſt* all things, *thou knoweſt that I love thee*,] ver. 17. and to teſtifie his Love to his Lord in *feeding his Lambs*, he wrote thoſe two famous *Epiſtles General* to the *Churches* of *Chriſt*; and in the latter of them he ſaith, [*I will not be negligent to put you always in remembrance*, &c. Yea, *I think it meet, while I am in this Tabernacle*, to ſtir you up, &c. knowing that ſhortly I muſt *put off this Tabernacle*, even as our *Lord Jeſus Chriſt* hath *ſhewed me*,] 2 Pet. 1. 12, 13, 14, 15. He knew that

that his Tent or Tabernacle muſt ſoon be taken down, his *Earthly Houſe*, (as *Paul*, who was a *Tent-maker*, calls the *Body* a Tent, 2 Cor. 5. 1. So both theſe two great Apoſtles did truly and duly endeavour to *magnifie*, and to *glorifie Chriſt*, both in Life and at Death, *John* 21. 19. and *Phil.* 1. 20. Thus both *Peter* the *Elder*, and *Paul* the *Aged* (as they ſtile themſelves, 1 *Pet.* 5. 1. and *Phil.* ver. 9.) were well in-laid and fortified before-hand, to undergo the Evils that attended *them both* in their Old Age, &c. May we but get Hearts to *own God* while we are Young, then God will not forget us, but *own us* when Old; and as *our days are*, ſo *ſhall our ſtrength be*, Deut. 33. 25. Now more particularly, the *Comforts* againſt the Evils of *Old Age* are,

Firſt, That *then* the *Law of our Members* cannot ſo eaſily lead us into captivity unto ſin, *Rom.* 7. 23. as formerly in the Heat and Vanity of our Youth. Indeed the *Witty Fable* runs thus, [*Cupid* (that Pagan God of Love,) and *Mors*, that is, *Death* happened to meet together, and to lodge all

all Night, (both of them in one and the ſame Inn,) but in the Morning they chanced to miſtake each others *Quivers* filled with *Darts*. Hereupon *Cupid* (after this) ſhot the *frozen Darts* of *Death* at many Young People in their briskeſt time of their Loving and Luſting, whereby many *Young Gallants and Tempting Ladies* were brought unto an untimely Death, *&c.* But on the contrary, *Mors* did ſhoot the *Fiery Darts* of *Cupid*, at the *Aged Perſons*, who in the Courſe of Nature were haſtening to the Grave; and hereby aroſe that wantonneſs of Old People for Marriage, *&c.* by which means it may be ſaid (as to *Second Cauſes*) ſome have ſhortned their own Lives, *&c.* Tho' the *Moral* of this *Fable* hold true in ſome ſingular Inſtances, yet for the General, 'tis an undeniable truth, that *Old Age* may comfort it ſelf with this bleſt *freedom* from *Youthful Luſts*; *Aged People* cannot be ſo *Eye-ſick*, nor ſo *Heart-ſick* of Luſtful Deſires, as the *Young* are, but are then arrived into a more quiet Harbour from the furious Tempeſts of *Carnal Concupiſcence*.

Se-

Secondly., The *Aged* may comfort themſelves with their long experience in the World, for *experimental Knowledge* doth far exceed, and excel that which is meerly *Notional*; and upon this account 'tis truly ſaid, [Tho' *Young Men think Old Men Fools*, yet the *Old* are *ſure*, that the *Young* are *Fools*, for want of experience:] For as Experience is called the *Miſtreſs of Fools*, ſo it truly is the *Mother of Prudence*. It was a Prophane Saying of a *Pagan Poet*, that *Prudence was above Deſtiny*; but a *Chriſtian* may ſafely ſay, that next to *Divine Providence*, *Humane Prudence* may challenge the higheſt place in the management of Humane Matters; and that *Old Age* hath the chiefeſt intereſt in that Prudence. Young *Elihu* did acknowledge *this* for a great Truth, ſaying [*multitude of Years* ſhould *teach Wiſdom*,] Job 32. 7. And *Muſicians* do experience, that *Old Lutes make a ſweeter Sound than New Ones*. The not knowing of this Truth was both the Folly and the Ruine of that Fooliſh King *Rehoboam*, [who chooſe to follow the Counſel of his *Green-heads* that

that ſtood before him, rather than of thoſe *Grave Senators* who had ſtood before his wiſer Father,] 1 *Kings* 12. 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, *&c.* As Young Men are properly for *Action*, ſo Old Men are principally for *Advice*; and therefore the *Roman Senate* conſiſted of *Senators*, (ſo called for their Age) which became ſo famous in the World, that it occaſioned that ſaying, [*Romani Sedendo Vincunt*,] as if the *Advice* of their *ſitting Senate* did contribute more to all their Glorious Conqueſts, than all the brave Actions of their Fighting Soldiers; and thus the Heads of Cities, *&c.* are hence called *Aldermen*, &c.

Thirdly, The *Aged* may comfort their own Hearts with this Conſideration likewiſe, that they have ſo long weathered the point under the conduct of their *Gracious God*, through ſuch a broad and tempeſtuous Sea of a moſt troubleſome Life. Oh, happy are thoſe that can ſay, [*many have been my Troubles*, but *the Lord hath delivered me out of them all*,] Pſal. 34. 19. and *God's Angel hath redeemed us from all our Evils*, in

in our whole Lives hitherto,] *Gen.* 48. 16. and that the *Pillar of Divine Providence* hath hitherto been our Guide in the Wilderneſs of this lower World, (as the *Cloudy Pillar* did guide *Iſrael* in that wayleſs, Waterleſs Wilderneſs, in their many motions and mutations,) and we have walked all along as Helpleſs Children, in the Hands of our Heavenly Father, whom we have ſometimes followed (as it were) *blindfold*, like *Abraham* the *Father of the Faithful*, [*who went out, not knowing whither he went,*] Heb. 11. 8. who tho' he knew not whither he went, yet he well knew with whom he went, for he was ever as a Child in his Father's Hand. Happy are ſuch as can ſay, [Lord, *thou haſt been our King of old,*] Pſal. 74. 12. and [we have been *Young*, but now are *Old*, yet never ſaw the *Righteous forſaken*, nor *his Seed*, *tho' begging Bread,*] Pſal. 37. 25. and [we will *Remember the days of Old*, &c.] Pſal. 143. 5. and [*this God* is our God for ever *and ever*, he will be our *Guide even unto Death*,] Pſal. 48. 14.

Fourthly,

Fourthly, The *Aged* may comfort themſelves, that now they are approaching near the end of their troubleſome Voyage, through a dangerous Sea, both of manifold *Tribulations*, and of many *Temptations* alſo; yea, and nigh to the end of their Toilſom Travel, and Wandrings in the Wilderneſs of this lower World, and now drawing nigh toward their Harbour and Haven of Eternal Happineſs in Heaven. The end of all Motion is Reſt, and the nearer we come to our *Centre*, the more *active* and *haſtening* we ought to be, that we may contradict that uncharitable Proverb, [*Juvenis in Sanctis, Senibus Satanizat in Annis,*] that is, *Young Saints* ſometimes prove no better than *Old Devils*; whereas ſuch as are *Saints while they are Young*, ought to become *Angels* when they come to be *Old*; for [the *Path of the Juſt* is like a *Shining Light*, that *ſhineth more and more to a perfect day,*] Prov. 4. 18. *Plutarch* affirms concerning the Laborious *Bee*, that it never degenerates into an idle *Drone*: And *Auguſtin*'s *Character* of a true *Chriſtian* is, [*Semel Electus, Semper Dilectus,*] *once Elected*, and *ever Beloved*;

this therefore makes our *Election sure*, 2 Pet. 1. 10. As we draw daily nearer our best Home, then to *hunger after it, and hasten toward it* so much the more, *&c.*

Fifthly, The *Old Disciples of Christ* may comfort themselves with this consideration, that the Lord loveth his *Mnasons*, Acts 21. 16. even when they are past their work; forasmuch as they have taken heed to *fulfill their Ministery* they *received in the Lord*, Col. 4. 17. Hitherto to the best of their *Abilities*, their *Consciences bearing Witness* hereto in the *Holy Ghost*, Rom. 9. 1. 2 Cor. 1. 12. Acts 23. 1. and 24. 16. they are still *beloved of God*, for what work they have already wrought *for his Glory*, and for the good of many Saints; the reflection of this cannot but conduce much to the Comfort of their own Souls: Tho' now they be like Travellers that ride upon Tired Horses, they can proceed no farther in publick Generation-work, yet they can say with *Paul the Aged*, Philem. *ver.* 9. [*to will, is present with us*, but how *to perform, we find not*,] Rom. 7. 18. And now their only work is to Ripen fast,

faſt, and to become fully Mellow to be gathered home, &c. *NB. Note well*, The Lord's tender loving-kindneſs to the godly *Levites* under the Law, [in *giving* them leave, when Old, to retire from that Laborious Service of his Sanctuary,] *Numb.* 8. 23, 24, 25. yet were they as *Judges*, &c. all which may comfort us under the Goſpel, &c. Still God commands, [*let the Younger* ſubmit to the *Elder*,] 1 Pet. 5. 5. and as *David* was kind to Young *Chimham*, for Old *Barzillai*'s ſake, 2 *Sam.* 19. 38. So the Lord is kind to the Off-ſpring of his Old Servants, who are Children of many Prayers, &c. Thus, tho' they be laid aſide, as Old Almanacks, uſeleſs by Men, they are not ſo by their loving God, &c.

Secondly, The *Cordials* and *Comforts* that the Lord hath left us upon Record againſt the *Fear of Death*. If we would get good Gold, we muſt go to *Ophir*; good Balm, we muſt go to *Gilead*, &c. So if we would get good Comfort, we muſt go to the *God of all True Comfort*, 2 Cor. 1. 3. and to the *Book* of God, which conſiſts of thoſe *full Breaſts* of *Conſolation* which we

are commanded to *ſuck and be ſatisfied* againſt all our Fears, *&c. Iſai.* 66. 11. *Job* calls *Death* the *King of Terrors*, chap. 18. 14. and ſo it is indeed a *Terror to Kings too*; the *Philoſopher* calls [τῶν φοβερῶν φοβερώτατον,] the moſt *formidable* of *Formidables*, and Nature in the beſt doth find it frightful enough; yet our Lord ſaith, [*I will not leave you Comfortleſs*,] John 14. 18.

The *Firſt Comfort* againſt the *Fear of Death*, and that our Lord hath left us for our Relief, is 1 Cor. 15. 55. that *Chriſt* hath *unſtinged* that *Serpent*, and that now his Redeemed may triumph over it. *Moſes* firſt *fled from* the *Serpent*; but being better informed, he *took it by the Tail*, and then it became an *Uſeful Rod* in his Hand, *Exod.* 4. 3, 4. Thus *Iſrael* at firſt fled from *Goliah*, as affrighted with the ſight of ſuch a Monſter of Mankind, but ſo ſoon as they underſtood that *David* had ſlain him, and laid him along without his Head upon the ground, then did they run as faſt to him to trample upon him, *&c.* as they had before run away from him ſore affright-

ed,

ed, 1 *Sam.* 17. 24, 52. So could we but believe that *Chriſt, our Lord David* had *ſwallowed up Death in Victory*, (as we are aſſured, *Iſai.* 25. 8. and that *Chriſt's Death* is the *Death of Death*, *Hoſ.* 13. 14.) then might we ſing a Triumphant Song (with the *Apoſtle*) over both *Death* and the *Grave*, &c.

A *Second Breaſt* of *Comfort* againſt the *Fear of Death* is, that precious Promiſe of God, [*Thou ſhalt not be afraid, when Deſtruction or Death cometh,*] Job 5. 21. and thus God ſaid to Old *Jacob*, [*fear not to go down to Egypt, for I will be with thee, and I will bring thee back again*, &c.] Gen. 46. 3, 4. Accordingly our *Saviour* ſaith to his *ſanctified ones*, Iſai. 13. 3. [*Fear not to go down among the Dead,* (which is *a going the way of all the Earth*, Joſh. 23. 14.) for I will *go down with thee*, and I will aſſuredly alſo *bring thee back again*, as *one* of my *Children* of the *Reſurrection*, Luke 20. 36.] as if he had ſaid [*I will* bring you without failure from the *Jaws of Death* to the *Joys of Heaven*, as ſurely as *Ezra* and *Nehemiah* brought all the *Captive Jews* out of the *Captivity of*

Babylon; and we muſt conſider for our Comfort, that Death ſeizeth upon the *Body* only, which we derive from the *Firſt Adam*, as *Joſeph's Miſtreſs* ſeized only upon *Joſeph's Garment*, his Perſon eſcaped; ſo the *pretious Soul is returned to God that gave it*, Eccleſ. 12. 7.

A *Third Breaſt of Conſolation* for Saints to *ſuck* againſt the *Fear of Death* is, [the *Righteous hath Hope in his Death*,] Prov. 14. 32. Death to a Believer is as the *Vally of Achor*, Joſh. 7. 24, 27. *Iſrael's* entrance into the Land of Promiſe, a *Door of Hope*, Hoſ. 2. 15. into the *Heavenly Canaan*, there to *ſing Hallelujah's* to the Lord for ever. *Death* indeed to *Sinners* is but a *Trap-door* that drops them down into Hell, *Pſal.* 9. 17. When that Grim-Sergeant Arreſts them, (by God's *Permiſſion* and *Commiſſion*,) in the *Devil's Name*, and hurls them into an Infinite Ocean of Hell-fire, Oh what Dreadful Skreaks doth that Guilty Soul give when it is hurried away and hurled into *Everlaſting Burnings* Iſai. 33. 14. and to ſwim naked as in Scalding Lead and Liquor for evermore

But bleſſed be God 'tis better with the *Saints*, whoſe Debts are all paid by their Dear Redeemer, they are not afraid of the *Arreſt* of *Death*, but looks upon it as *God's Officer*, ſent to give them poſſeſſion of a *Manſion of Glory*, and therefore *their Hearts are not troubled* when their *Lord ſends for them to be ever with him in Heavenly Happineſs*, John 14. 1, 2, 3, 4. and 16. 7. and 1 Theſ. 4. 17. 18. Oh, how willing was Old *Jacob* to go down into *Egypt*, when it was only to ſee his *younger Son Joſeph*, whom he had not ſeen for many years, *&c.* How much more *willing*, yea *deſirous* ought we to be to *go up to Heaven*, a far better place than *Egypt*) there to ſee our *Elder Brother Jeſus Chriſt!* How glad were thoſe *Three Wiſe Men* of the *Eaſt* to take a long Journey, when it was only to ſee the *Babe of Bethlehem*, *Chriſt* in the *Cradle*, &c! Now if we can but ſay as thoſe *Wiſe Men* ſaid, [*We have ſeen his Star*, &c. Matth. 2. 2, 11.] how much more ought we to long for this Journey, *&c.* that we may behold our Lord *Chriſt advanced* upon the *Throne* of his *Glory*, and *to behold his Face in Righteouſneſs*, Pſal. 17. 15, *&c.*

which is a *Beatifical Viſion*; a Sight far exceeding thoſe Three, [*Romam in Flore, Paulum in Ore, & Chriſtum in Carne,*] which Father *Auguſtin* ſo earneſtly wiſhed to ſee, namely, *Rome* in its *Glory*, *Paul* in the *Pulpit*, and *Chriſt* in the *Fleſh*. Alas, all thoſe Sights are infinitely below the beholding him in his Glory, 1 John 3. 2. It was a good Prayer of the ſame *Auguſtin*, ſaying, [*Lord, can no Man ſee thy Face, and live?* O then let me die, *that I may ſee it*, &c.]

A *Fourth Cordial* againſt the *Fear of Death* is, [*Better is the day of our Death*, than the *day of our Birth*,] Eccleſ. 7. 12. 'Tis better every way: For,

(1.) Our *Birth* begins our Miſeries, but our *Death* ends them; *if we die in the Lord*, we are bleſſed, *Rev.* 14. 13. Whereas *Man born of a Woman, is born to trouble*, &c. Job 14. 1. Yea miſerable ſo ſoon as warm in the Womb at Conception, *Pſal.* 51. 5. *Birth* is our entrance into this lower *preſent Evil World*, Gal. 1. 4. but *Death* in *Chriſt* is our entrance into the beſt and bleſſed World.

(2.) We

(2.) We come crying into this World, *&c.* but ſome *Saints* have gone ſinging and triumphing out of it into a better World, hoping that their *Death* was but the Day-break of Eternal Brightneſs, *&c.*

A *Fifth Cordial* is, that *Death cannot ſeparate us from* the Love of God, *Rom.* 8. 28. 'Tis ſo far from deſtroying the *Union*, that it is called a *ſleeping in Jeſus*, 1 Theſ. 4. 14. And as by *ſleep* the *frame of the Body* is *refreſhed*, ſo by *Death* the *Union* of the *Soul* is *refined*. Now when we are wearied with our days Labour, we are not afraid to go take our reſt: When *Lazarus* died, our Lord ſaid, [*our Friend Lazarus ſleepeth,*] John 11. 11. and he ſaid the ſame of *Jairus's Daughter*, Matth. 9. 24. and this is the frequent Phraſe in Scripture, to call *Death* a *Sleep*, Job 7. 21. 2 Sam. 7. 12. 1 Cor. 11. 30. Now as *Sleep* doth not ſeparate Friends but only for a time, betwixt [*good Night*] and [*good Morrow,*] ſo no more doth *Death*, which is but a bidding [*good Night,*] for after *ſleeping* in the Grave, (as *in a Bed*, Iſai. 57. 2.) the *Morning comes to riſe again.*

The

The *Sixth Cordial* is, 2 *Cor.* 5. 1, 2, 3, to 9. [*We know,*] 'tis not, *we think*, or *we hope only*; this is the true Triumph of our Truſting in *Chriſt*, our *leaning* upon *the Lord*, Iſai. 50. 10. [that *when* our *Clayie Cottages moulder down*, we have a *Manſion of Glory to go to.*] While we abide in thoſe tottering Tabernacles, [*we groan earneſtly*, being Burdened,] *ver.* 2. 4. that is, both with *Sin* and *Miſery*, whereof we have here our Back-burdens, Now who would not but be disburdened, and be at *Eaſe* and *Reſt*; in the *Grave the Weary find Reſt*, Job 3. 17. but the *Reſt that is found in Chriſt*, Matth. 11. 28, 29, 30. is for the *Soul* as well as *Body*, &c. Rev. 14. 13. and who would not be willing to *put off Rotten Rags*, and to *put on Royal Robes*, &c. Many more *Cordials* might be mentioned; as,

(7thly) For me (ſaith *Paul*) *to die, is Gain*, Phil. 1. 21. becauſe Death to a good Man brings *freedom* from all *Evil*, and a *fruition of all Good:* And hereupon he

(8thly)

(8thly) He deſired to be diſſolved, &c. ver. 23. The Greek word [Ἀναλῦσαι,] ſignifies, to *launch forth*, to looſe off from the Shore of Life, and to launch out into the Ocean of Immortality and Glory; this was all his Song, he longed to be with *Chriſt*, ever after he had been wrapt up to the Third Heaven.

(9thly) Yea, and Old *Simeon* thought it *beſt of all* (with *Paul*) to die, when he ſang that ſweet Song, [*Lord, now let thy Servant depart in peace*, &c. Luke 2. 29. as is largely ſpoke to before; adding only this here, he only ſaw the *Lord's-Chriſt in weakneſs*, with an Eye of Senſe; but we ſee *him in Glory*, with an *Eye* of *Faith*, therefore may better depart, not *in Peace* only, but alſo *in Joy* and *Comfort*.

(10thly) How couragious was that *Proto-Martyr*, *Stephen*, againſt the Terrors of a moſt Terrible Death, after he had *ſeen the Heavens opened*, and *Chriſt ſtanding* at the *Right Hand of God*, Acts 7. 56. The like Proſpect we have offered to our Faith, which is the Key that opens Heaven, and may we but fix our Spiritual

ritual Eyes upon that Glorious Object, this would wonderfully enable us to lay down our Mortal Bodies in peace, and ſend up our Immortal Souls into the Hands of him that bought it, crying, [*Lord Jeſus, receive my Spirit.*]

(Laſtly) But thanks be to God, who giveth us the Victory, through our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, 1 Cor. 15. 57. with 55, 56.

Thirdly, The *Cordials* againſt Terrors of the *Day of Judgment*, which ſurely *follows Death*, Heb. 9. 27. and which is called a *Terrible* and *Dreadful Day*, very often in Scripture; as *that Day ſhall burn like an Oven*, Mal. 4. 1. the *Sun turned into Darkneſs*, and *Moon into Blood*, Acts 2. 20. and *Elements ſhall melt with fervent Heat*, &c. 2 Pet. 3. 10. and the Lord will come in *flaming Fire*, &c. 2 Theſ. 1. 7, 8. and *with Fire and Sword* will *God plead with all Fleſh*, &c. Iſai. 66. 15, 16. ſee likewiſe *Joel* 2. 31. *Matth.* 25. 31, 32. *Rev.* 1. 7, &c. Now if a Crack of Thunder, and a Flaſh of Lightning, at the breaking of a ſingle ſorry Cloud, do ſo affright us, how much more when the *whole Heavens break*, and drop down like

like *Scalding Bell-Mettal about our Ears*, &c.

Yet, *Note well*, (*1ſt*) There is *Comfort* for the *Choſen Ones*, they *ſhall be caught* up in the *Clouds to meet the Lord in the Air*, and ſo *ſhall ever be with the Lord*, and therefore *comfort your ſelves*, &c. 1 Theſ. 4, 16, 17, 18.

(*2dly*) As *Death leaves* us, ſo the *Day of Judgment* will find us; as the *Tree falleth towards the South*, or towards the *North*, there *it lieth*, Eccleſ. 11. 3. Even ſo (as is before obſerved) if we fall by *Death* upon the *Right Hand* of *Chriſt*, among his *pretious Sheep*, then are we called upon *to lift up our Heads*, for the *Day of our Redemption is come*, Luke 21. 28. Epheſ. 4. 30. that way the Tree leans, that way it falls; Oh, that while we *live* we may *lean to Chriſt*.

(*3dly*) The *due Obſervation* of the *main end of Life*, is to be *uſeful* to the *end of our Lives*; *we ſhould be ever ready*, Matth. 24. 44. May we but become *good Stewards*, then *bleſſed is that Servant, whom his Maſter ſhall find ſo doing*, ver. 46.

(*4thly*) Tho' we be conſcious to our ſelves, that our *Obedience* has been *exceeding narrow* to God's *Commandments*, which

which are *exceeding broad*, Pſal. 119.96. yet may we *rejoice* with *Trembling*, Phil. 2. 11. becauſe our *Judge* is our *Advocate*, who *became ſin for us*, &c. that we *might be made the Righteouſneſs of God in him*, 2 Cor. 5. 21. 1 John 2. 1, 2.

(5thly) May we but upon good grounds be perſuaded, that [we are *juſtified* by *Faith*, then *have we peace with God through Jeſus Chriſt our Lord*,] Rom. 5. 1. this is known, if we be *ſanctified* by *the Spirit*, 2 Theſ. 2. 13. For this *latter* doth evidence the *former*; and having got God's *Seal and Earneſt*, which he never gives to a *Reprobate*, then *fear not*, Gen. 15. 1.

(6thly) Be ſure to have the *Line* of *Scarlet Thread* bound to our Windows, as *Rahab* had, *Joſh.* 2. 18. this was the *ſaving Colour*, a *Red Cord*: Thus *Iſrael's* Door-poſts muſt be *Red with Blood* when the *deſtroying Angel paſſed over Egypt*, *Rahab made haſte* and *delayed not*, as Pſal. 119. 60. So ſoon as ſhe diſmiſſed the Spies, long before *Jericho* fell, *&c.* Oh, could we get this *Scarlet Line*, the *Blood* of *Chriſt* fixed upon our Hearts; this *Sign* ſaved *Rahab*, and made her famous, *Heb.* 11. 31. and *Jam.* 2. 25. then our *Joſhuah* will ſave us, and ſay to us alſo,

alſo, [*Come, ye bleſſed of my Father, inherit*, &c.] Matth. 25. 34. In the mean time we Aged Ones muſt be ever praying, [*Lord caſt me not off in my Old Age*, and *forſake me not when ſtrength fails me*, Pſal. 71. 9.

Laus Ei Soli tribuatur omnes,
Cujus Aſſiatu Labor extat omnis,
Fructus ut Vitæ referantur omnes;
——*orbis in Oras.*

FINIS.

Christopher. Nesse Ætatis Suæ 56: 1678
Minnister of the Gospel in fleet Street London.

Divine Legacy,

Bequeathed unto all

MANKIND,

OF ALL

Ranks, Ages and Sexes:

Directing

How we may live Holily in the Fear of God, and how we may die happily in the Favour of God; both which Duties are of Universal Concern.

The Rules here are, how to be *Truly Valourous* in warring a good Warfare, and in fighting the the good Fight of Faith while we Live, and to be *Blessedly Victorious* when we Die.

By *Christopher Ness*, Minister of the Gospel in *London*.

Exitus Acta probat, & Finis Coronat Opus, saith the Philosopher.

Our Last Works should be our Best Works, saith our Lord, *Rev.* 2. 19.

London, Printed by *T. S.* and sold by *T. Parkhurst*, at the *Bible* and *Three Crowns* in *Cheapside*, and *J. Robinson*, at the *Golden Lion* in St. *Paul's* Church-yard. 1700.

longer ſtride thereby, ſo did *David* here, who upon ſecond thoughts, (ever better than the firſt) recoiling and reflecting upon himſelf, ſaying, [*this is my Infirmity,*] and Oh how he bebeaſts himſelf for ſo *ſtumbling!* ver. 22. ſo *fooliſh was I*, and *Ignorant*, and even *as a Beaſt before thee*, my God,] the Hebrew word for *Beaſt* is *Behemoth*; which is the plural feminine Hebrew, ſignifying a Big-bellied Beaſt, full of Young Ones, (which is a clear reſemblance of *Original Sin* in us, the Mother of all Actual Sins,) and the ſame word [*Behemoth*] the Lord uſeth in his Humbling Speech to *Job*, Job 40.15, to 24. whereby is expreſſed, that Monſter of Beaſts, the Beaſt of Beaſts, the *Elephant*. By this (and by other Speeches of the ſame tendency) God ſo humbled *Job*, as to make him [*abhor himſelf*, and to *repent in* Duſt and Aſhes,] *Job* 42. 5. Thus likewiſe that Holy Man *Agur*, who vilifies, yea nullifies himſelf to the utmoſt, ſaying, [*ſurely I am more brutiſh than any Man*, and I have not the *underſtanding of a Man*, &c.] Prov. 30. 2, 3. Here was true *Humility*, which is derived *ab Humo*, ſignifying the *Ground*, becauſe this Grace lays us flat on the ground; thus theſe godly perſons (and many more upon Scripture-record) did indeed ſtumble *in the*

way

way of Righteouſneſs, yea and ſome of them very *fouly*, yet none of them did ſo ſtumble, as to fall finally from that bleſſed way; they all did recover themſelves by Repentance, they all did return to this way of Righteouſneſs; and they all did perſevere therein to their dying day: So their *Gray Hairs* became a *Crown of Glory* to them, being all *found in the way of Righteouſneſs*, *Note well*, we muſt all be found in that way, when both Old Age and Death alſo come to find us. Old Father *Chryſoſtom* ſaid, [*Canities tunc Venerabilis eſt, quando ea gerit quæ canitiem decent*, to wit, then is Old Age moſt worthily Venerable, then is Hoarineſs of Hairs moſt truly Honourable, when only ſuch Deeds are done by it, that doth well become it both in the ſight of God and Men: We Old Ones ought to make it our *exerciſe* which the bleſſed Apoſtle made his, ſaying, [ἐν τούτῳ ἀσκῶ] *Herein do*, I do *recreate* my ſelf, (as the word ſignifies) to *keep a Conſcience void of offence*, both *toward God and toward Man*,] Acts 24. 16. Oh that we could make this ſame our Exerciſe, yea even our *Recreation* both Night and Day; uſing our utmoſt Diligence, Skill, Will and Affections, diſciplining and inuring our ſelves herein, and thereby we ſhall neither be

aſhamed

ashamed to live, nor *afraid to die*. We must live (as that Apostle did) *in all good Conscience*, Acts 23. 1. *Good*, both with the goodness of *Integrity*, and with the goodness of *Tranquility*; we must keep our Consciences clear and clean, better offend all the World, yea all the *Witches* in the World, than offend our own Consciences; for *Conscience* is *God's Spie*, and 'tis Man's Overseer; as it is God's Deputy-Judge, so it is Man's Domestick Chaplain, bearing witness of all our Doings and desirings; and accordingly excusing or accusing, absolving or condemning; yea comforting or tormenting us: And [if our own *Hearts* (or Consciences) do *condemn us*, God is *greater than our Hearts*, and will condemn us *much more*,] 1 John. 3. 20. Whereas on the contrary, when Hoary Hairs are not found in the way of Righteousness, that Hoariness is so far from being Honourable, that 'tis rather *Mucor* than *Canities*, a nasty Mouldiness, and not a venerable Hoariness. 'Tis sad with such, that the older they grow, they wax worse and worse, 2 *Tim.* 3. 13. and do no better than stink above ground, being *Dead* while they *Live*, 1 Tim. 5. 6. What can be more odious than an old Lascivious Goat, than an old Fornicator, *having Eyes*

full

full of Adultery, and that cannot cease from sin, 2 *Pet.* 2. 14, *&c.* Gray Hairs and Green Thoughts make an abominable agreement, such are Heteroclites in declining Nature, and Monsters of Mankind in the World; in whom it is so far gone with them, and Lust hath such an unlimited power over them, that neither *strength of Grace*, as Gen. 39. 9. in Young *Joseph*, strong Grace kept him from that great wickedness and sin against his God: nor *decays* of *Nature* can restrain them from their Youthful Extravagancy, as *Gen.* 18. 12. *Sarah* said, (after I am old, shall I lust,) old and cold is our English Proverb. It was the aggravation of *Solomon*'s sin that he was in his Old Age so easily drawn away from God and godliness by his Idolatrous Wives, 1 *Kings* 11. 4. Oh how ridiculous it is to behold a sinner, a Child of *Fourscore* or an hundred years old! yet such shameful sights as these are denounced *accursed*, Isa. 65. 20. But if we indeed be the true Sons and Daughters of *Abraham*, we ought to do what he did, of whom it is said, that he *went to his Grave in a good Old Age*, or as the Hebrew hath it, with a *good Gray Head*, Gen. 25. 8. We must imitate him in this herein, even all we that are Old, that we may be *Good* as well as *Old*, that we may

both Live and and Die in a *good Old Age* as he did; for unleſs we walk in *Abraham*'s ſteps in this World while we live we can never expect to lodge in *Abraham*'s Boſom when we die. *Abraham died an Old Man and full of Years*, Gen. 25. 8. He was as fully ſatisfied to leave the World, as men are wont to be willing to riſe from the Table, when ſatisfied to the full with Food: And thus *Job* ſaid, I *would not live always*, Job 7: 16. but more of this after. It was the ſaying of *Auguſtus Cæſar*, (that Great Emperor, in whoſe Reign our *Lord Jeſus* was born) *Audite me Senem vos Juvenes, quem Juvenem multi Senes audierunt*, be pleaſed, Oh ye Young Men, to hearken diligently unto me, who am now Old, whom many Old Men did hear attentively when I was but Young. *David* ſaith, *I have been Young, and now am Old; come ye Children, hearken to me, and I will teach you the fear of the Lord*, Pſal. 34. 11. and 37. 25. Accordingly, I ſay in all humbleneſs of Soul, Oh that all People (both Young and Old) may lend an hearing Ear to me who am now very Old, whom all Perſons of all Ages did ſavingly hearken to when I was Young; ſo that the Lord by his Grace made me a Spiritual Father to many Souls both Young and Old, Male and

and Female, Rich and Poor, yea, Bond and Free, *All these are one in Jesus Christ*, Col. 3. 11. whom I have begotten in the Gospel, (as the Apostle doth phrase it,) 1 *Cor.* 4. 15. who all rise up and call me their *Spiritual Father in Christ*; amongst whom there is one remarkable Passage I cannot but record, which indeed is worthy to be kept in everlasting remembrance, namely, While I was Minister at *Cottingham* near *Hull*, that Ministerial Charge being resigned over to me by Famous Dr. *Winter*, when he went over into *Ireland* to be the Provost of the College at *Dublin*,) there it pleased the Lord so to bless my Ministry, as to honour me with the Conversion of many Souls, both in that place, and in other places round about. But above all, there was one *Thomas Raspin*, an Old Man, and one of the most substantial Men in that great Town, who (through grace) had most evidently and most eminently a new work of Conversion wrought upon his heart in his Old Age, and when Gray Hairs were upon him, which indeed made him a most lively Servant of *Christ* to his dying day, *bringing forth fresh Fruit in his Old Age*, &c. Psal. 92. 14. whose Funeral Sermon I then preached, wherein I observed what a rare work of God this was to be

effectually called in our Old Age; for beſide *Abraham* in the Old Teſtament, and *Nicodemus* in the New Teſtament, who were both called home from Idolatry, and from Ignorance, when they were Old Men: And very few more ſuch Inſtances can be found out upon Record in either Teſtament. Now ſeeing this ſignal and ſingular Favour of God was vouchſafed to ſuch a worthleſs Worm as me, about fifty years ago, when I had been but about ſeven years employed in the work of the Miniſtry; if the Lord was then pleaſed to cauſe Old Perſons ſo ſavingly to hearken unto my Miniſterial Voice, while I was ſo Young, how much more may I hope now, that all Perſons of all Ages will give their moſt diligent Attention unto that moſt weighty Advice, (for I cordially profeſs to ſpeak no otherwiſe than as an *Oracle of God*, unto all Aged ones, which cannot prove unſeaſonable to any that are Young; becauſe, if the Lord delight in them to lengthen out their Lives, (and not *cut them off for* their wickedneſs in the *midſt of their days*, Pſal. 55. 23.) they muſt come to be Aged alſo: And therefore let all lend an hearing Ear unto that grave Counſel which I (an Old Servant of Chriſt) doth declare at this time to you in the Name of the Lord. We

are

are told how *Moſes* was fourſcore Years Old when God ſent him with God's Meſſage to *Pharaoh*, Exod. 7. 7. to ſhew, that the words of an Old Meſſenger of God ought to take a deep impreſſion upon the Hearts of all Hearers, in caſe they be not Caſe-hardened as *Pharaoh* was, over and over again, both by himſelf, and by God, and likewiſe by the Devil. But I hope this is not the Caſe of any of you, (as *Heb. 6. 9.*) tho' I mention the Caſe of *Pharaoh*. Now I who am very near Fourſcore may likewiſe ſay, [*I am perſuaded better things of you, tho' I thus ſpeak.*] 'Twas *Zuinglius* his practice, when he had been inveighing againſt Vice, to come off with theſe ſoft words, [*Probe Vir, hoc nihil ad te,*] this is nothing to thee, Oh thou Honeſt Man. So my preſent proſpect through Grace is, that I may prevail with many, either to haſten into, or to keep cloſe in the way of Righteouſneſs, if in it already; *how forcible are right words*, Job 6. 25. eſpecially to prepared Hearts, more eſpecially when *multitude of Days and Years doth teach Wiſdom?* Job 32. 7. I have made a long diſcourſe in diſcovering the many Characters of the *true Conquerors through the Love of Chriſt.* Now ſeeing every Conqueror doth win a Crown, which hath this In-

ſcription upon it, [*Vincenti Dabo, to him that overcometh, will I give it*, Rev. 2. 7, 10, 26. and 3. 5, 21. and 21. 7. but my preſent Task is to ſhew ſome Inſtances of ſuch Conquerors, to wit, ſuch Aged Ones as are found in the *way of Righteouſneſs*, the Crown of Life, the Crown of Glory ſhall be aſſuredly ſet and ſeated upon their Hoary Heads. After the general Diſcourſe upon this Subject aforeſaid, that all us Aged Perſons may come both to win and wear this bleſſed Crown, I ſhall ſpeak more particularly upon that *Theme* of *Old Age*, concerning its *Nature* and its *Accidents*, and concerning thoſe *Duties* which ought to attend it, whereby it may be made (like *Abraham*'s aforeſaid) a *good Old Age*, &c. 'Tis ſaid to the honour of *Young Men*, that they had overcome the Wicked One, 1 *John* 2. 13. Tho youthful Paſſions be moſt rapid in them, then 'tis a ſhame for us Aged ones to fall ſhort of theſe, *&c.*

Firſt of the 1*ſt* of theſe, namely, its *Nature*, *Old Age* is, without all controverſie, a real Bleſſing of God, in, and of it ſelf, otherwiſe God would never have made it the matter of this exceeding great and pretious Promiſe, which he was pleaſed to annex to the Fifth Commandment, [*Honour thy Father and Mother*,

ther, that thy days may be long in the Land which the Lord thy God giveth thee,] *Exod.* 20. 12. *Matth.* 15. 4. *Epheſ.* 6. 2, 3. This Duty of Children to obey their Parents in the Lord, the Apoſtle calls it a *Right Duty*, Epheſ. 6. 1. and commends it moreover as a Duty, not only *good before Men*, but *acceptable alſo unto God*, 1 Tim. 5. 4. This Fifth Commandment is called the *Firſt Commandment with Promiſe*, Epheſ. 6. 2. that is, the Firſt Affirmative Commandment, or the Firſt in the Second Table, or the Firſt of all the Ten, with ſuch a Special Promiſe of Long Life in the Land of the Living, [*that thou maiſt* live long,] Epheſ. 6. 3. As good Children do help to lengthen their Parents days, (ſo *Joſeph* did *Jacob*'s, &c.) So God for encouraging them in their Duty, doth promiſe to lengthen their Days; and if at any time God take this Long Leaſe from them here, he grants them a *Freehold-Eſtate* of a greater Value hereafter. If God do deny to give them the *Silver* of a Temporal Life in this lower World, he will be ſure to pay them moſt plentifully with the *Gold* of an Eternal Life in the upper and better World; whereas on the contrary, ſuch as are ſtubborn and undutiful Children, as they ſhorten their Parents

Lives, and bring down their Gray Hairs with ſorrow to their Graves: So God often doth ſhorten the Lives of ſuch wicked Children, and cuts them off in the midſt of their Days, as God did to wicked *Abimelech*, of whom it is ſaid, that *the Lord* rendred *upon him the Evil which he had done unto his Father Gideon*, Judg. 9. 56. Yea, and *Solomon* ſaith, [the Eye that mocketh at his Father, (as curſed *Cham* did at *Noah*) and deſpiſeth to *obey his Mother*, the Ravens of the Vally ſhall pick out that mocking Eye,] *Prov.* 30. 17. God takes notice of the offending Member, and appoints this Puniſhment for it, and a ſad one too; if this be underſtood of the Infernal Ravens, thoſe Black Devils of Hell, thoſe are curſed with a witneſs, whom the Holy Ghoſt thus curſeth with ſuch emphatical expreſſions, and in ſuch exquiſite Terms: Thoſe Ravens of the Vally are ſaid to be moſt ravenous, and the firſt thing they do to a Carcaſe, is to pick out the Eyes, as *Horace* ſaith,

Effoſſos Oculos Voret Atro Guttare Corvus.

And our *Saviour* adds to the ſaying of *Solomon*, [He that curſeth Father or Mother, let him die the Death,] *Matth.* 15. 4. All this does make it manifeſt, that

that as a short Life is a Curse, so a long Life is a Blessing; otherwise as on the one hand *Godliness* would never have left to it by the Lord, so many precious *Promises*, as these, (to name but a few of the many) beside the afore-named.

(1.) God promiseth to his people (1.) [*That he will fulfil the number of their days,*] Exod. 23. 26. that is, they shall dye *full of days* as *Abraham*, Gen. 25. 8. as *Isaac*, Gen. 35. 29. and as *David* did, 1 Chron. 29. 28. They all did fall like full-ripe Apples into the hands of God the right Owner, and the great Gatherer of them.

(2.) That [*He will take away Sickness from them,*] Deut 7. 15. that is, he will bestow the great blessing of Health upon them, which is the best of Temporal Blessings; for a sickly Life is a lifeless Life, and no better than a lingring Death: *Non est Vivere, sed Valere, Vita,* saith *Martial*, Health is the Reward of Piety, *Prov.* 3. 8.

(3.) That [they shall be *blessed in the* City, and blessed in the Country, *blessed* every where,] *Deut.* 28. 2, 3, *&c.* mercy and goodness follows them all the days of their Lives, as *David* saith of himself, *Psal.* 23. 6. as before he had said, [he *asked Life of thee*, and thou *gavest it him*,

him, even *length* of Days, *&c. Pſal.* 21. 4. and he deſcribing the State of a godly Man in *Pſal.* 91. he reckons up the mighty Power of God in preſerving his Perſon from manifold Calamities, ſo far as it conſiſts with God's Glory, and the godly Man's good; yea tho' he die of the Plague, (for the beſt are not exempted from common Calamities) yet ſhall he be ſaved from the plague of the Plague, and with *long Life will I ſatisfie him*, Pſal. 91. 16.

(4.) Another Divine Promiſe is, [*cleave unto the Lord*, for *He is thy Life*, and the *length of thy Days.*] Deut. 30. 20. Agreeable unto this is, that Godly Wiſdom ſhall add both length of Days and a long Life, and Peace unto ſuch as are bleſt with it, *Prov.* 3. 2. and thus God told wiſe *Solomon*, [ſeeing thou haſt not asked long Life, *&c.* but Wiſdom of me, yet if thou wilt keep my Commands, I will *add length of Days* to thee,] 1 King. 3. 11, 14. Many more Promiſes of a long Life might be added, but to avoid prolixity this ſhall ſuffice, adding only that length of Days is a tranſcendent privilledge, and deſirable in general by all Mankind. This was *David's* Doctrine, which he proclaimeth with a challenge to the whole World, crying (as it were) with ſound of Trumpet, [*What Man is he that deſireth*

deſireth Life, and loveth many days that he may ſee Good,] Pſal. 34. 12. *Auguſtine* brings all ſorts of Mortal Men and Women, who all unanimouſly anſwered to *David*'s Queſtion, ſaying with much eagerneſs, every one for themſelves, [*Ego & Ego,*] *I would,* and *I would,* &c. All Perſons do deſire a long Life, many happy Days, and a comfortable Enjoyment of all: But alas how few there be, that take right Courſes to obtain the true Happineſs according to that wholeſom Counſel which *David* doth preſcribe for the compaſſing of it, *ver.* 13, 14, 15, *&c.* Again,

2*dly.* What a bleſſing is *long Life,* may be farther demonſtrated by the many direful Threatnings which the Lord hath denounced againſt wickedneſs, (as before his pretious Promiſes to Godlineſs, *&c.*) that the Wicked ſhall not live out half his days, *Pſal.* 55. 24. and in many more Scriptures too long here to relate, all ſhewing that a ſhort Life is a curſe, *&c.* yet know that in ſome caſes it is a bleſſing, as to thoſe who are *taken away from the evil to come,* 1 King. 14. 13. and Iſai. 57. 1. Juſt as when a Fire breaks forth in an Houſe, then Men carry forth their Jewels, but God conveys his Cabinet into a better World, their Souls enter into Reſt and paſs to Heaven.

The

The Concluſion of this *1ſt Point* then is this, That ſeeing a *long Life* is *promiſed* by the *Lord* to the Godly, and a *ſhort Life* is threatned by *Him* to the Wicked, therefore it muſt neceſſarily follow from theſe two aforenamed premiſes, that a good Old Age, and to *go the Grave full of Years*, and full of Graces as well as Years, (as *Abraham* did) is a great bleſſing of God as to its own *Nature* and *Subſtance*, &c.

The *2d Point* I have to diſcourſe upon, is the *Accidents* of this *Nature* and *Subſtance* of Old Age, which are principally *two*, namely, *(1ſt)* The *Quantity*; and *(2dly)* The *Quality* of it.

Firſt, Concerning the *Quantity* of it, and this is twofold.

1ſt That which was more *ſpecial* and peculiar to the *Antedeluvian Patriarchs*. And,

(2dly) That which is moſt General and Univerſal to all the *Poſt-diluvian* generation of Mankind ever ſince *Noah*'s Flood, not only unto this day, but alſo to the end of the World.

1ſt As to the *Patriarchs*, They indeed lived very long, and to a very great Old Age, yet they all did die at laſt; for the God of Nature did ordain, (upon the Fall of *Adam*) that Nature ſhould decay and

and die at last. *NB. Note well*, That none of the *Patriarchs* did live out compleatly a Thousand Years; for that term of Time is reckoned *as one Day*, 2 Pet. 3. 8. and if any of those Patriarchs had lived out their Thousand Years, then that Divine Doom upon faln Mankind, [*in the Day, thou eatest the forbidden Fruit, thou shalt surely Die,*] Gen. 2. 17. Now if any one of those had lived beyond a Thousand Years, then Man had not died within the compass of that Mystical Day, *&c.* The *Patriarchs* indeed had a very large Quantity, and a long Lease of their Lives; and this was for many weighty *Reasons*, of four several sorts: *(1.) Natural. (2.) Civil. (3.) Moral. (4.) Theological.*

The *1st* is *Natural*, because (1.) There was much vertue in those Herbs upon which they constantly made their daily Meals.

(2dly) The *Climate* where they lived had a most temperate Air, and every way most congruous to their Constitutions.

But *(3dly)* above all, their own Temperance from Surfeiting and Drunkenness, for the Old Adage is, [*Plures perenut Gula, quam Gladio,*] more Persons do die by Intemperance, than by the Sword, *&c.* These *Three* are the Natural Reasons.

In

In the (*2d*) Place, the *Civil Reaſons* are,

(*1ſt*) They lived ſo long both for the better populating of the World. And,

(*2dly*) For the better ſpreading of the Church of God, (out of the *White Line*) in the World; they lived thus long to beget Sons and Daughters for this purpoſe.

Then in the *3d* Place, the *Moral* Reaſons are,

(*1ſt*) For the better inſtitution of all *Arts* and *Sciences*, &c. And,

(*2dly*) For the more promoting of their own Experimental knowledge, becauſe they wanted thoſe Books and Libraries which we in our days do enjoy; therefore the Lord lent them ſuch long Leaſes of *Eight or Nine* Hundred Years, whereby they got the greater ſtock of Knowledge by ſuch long Experience.

And in the *4th* Place, The *Theological Reaſon* is, For the propagation of the True Religion in the World, (as was hinted above) in the *White Line*, the Poſterity of *Seth*, as the *Black Line* was the Off-ſpring of curſed *Cain*, as is made apparent in the draught of ancient Genealogies which are drawn with a *White* and a *Black Line*, all along to diſtinguiſh the *Church* from the *World*.

NB. Note well, (1.) As the longeſt Day hath the ſhorteſt Night, ſo the longeſt Life

Life of thoſe Patriarchs had the ſhorteſt Death; for the night of Death came upon them at the laſt; we read of no Agonies they had in their Dying, *&c.*

NB. Note well, (2.) As the *Microcoſm*, or *great World* was drown'd (as it were) with a Dropſie, in *Noah*'s deluge, and ſhall at laſt be burned (as it were) with a burning Fever; even ſo the *Microcoſm*, or *Man*, who is called [the *little World.*] More of this afterwards.

But 2*dly* as to the *Quantity* or Leaſe of Man's Life, (ſince the Patriarchs time) which is now general and univerſal over all Mankind, we muſt know, that as the long Lives of thoſe *Patriarchs*, near the beginning of the World (tho' now faln under ſin) doth intimate to us, and give us a gueſs, how long Man might have lived upon the Earth, (had he not ſinned) before he had been tranſlated into Heaven, as *Enoch* was: So that the Age of Man began to be ſhortned after *Noah*'s Flood, and more eſpecially after the *confuſion of Tongues* at the *building of Babel*; for *Peleg* (which ſignifies *Diviſion*, ſo called becauſe Tongues were divided in that day) and his Son *Regu*, and thoſe born after them, lived not above half the time of thoſe that were born before them, as *Parens* notes well in his *Medulla*

dulla Hiſtor. Eccleſ. pag. 15. *NB. Note well,* May not we in our Day call our Sons [*Peleg*] as *Heber* did his Son; for in a colour of building up *Sion*, 'tis rather a *Babel*, becauſe of the *Confuſion* of *Tongues* amongſt us, not underſtanding one anothers Languages, *Proh Dolor*, this is for Lamentation, *&c.* Know likewiſe, that after this diminution of Man's Age at the Confuſion of Tongues, *Moſes* comes and mentions a ſhorter cut of the Leaſe of Man's Life, as we are told in the Ninetieth *Pſalm*, which is called the *Prayer of Moſes*, that he made moſt probably when he ſaw the Carcaſes of the People fall ſo faſt in the Wilderneſs, and committed to Writing for the inſtruction of thoſe that were left alive, yet were doomed to Death, as *Numb.* 14. at large relateth; and this Prayer of *Moſes* is fitly placed next to the *eighty ninth Pſalm*, that it might be an illuſtration of that paſſage, [*What Man is he that liveth, and ſhall not ſee Death? ſhall he deliver his Soul from the Hand of the Grave?*] Pſal. 89. 48. After this verſe, *Moſes* reads a Divine Lecture upon Man's Mortality, ſhewing how *God turns Man to deſtruction*, Pſal. 90. 3. that is, God by turning looſe upon Man divers Diſeaſes, turns him now ſoon out of the World.

And

And when *Moſes* had ſet forth the miſery of Man's Life by many ſimilitudes, as a *Watch*, a *Flood*, a *Sleep*, *Flower*, &c.) which indeed is ſuch a Miſery, as cannot ſufficiently be ſet forth by any ſimilitudes, *ver.* 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9. He at laſt comes to determine how ſhort a Leaſe God gives Man of his Life, ſaying, [the *days* of *our Years*, are *Threeſcore Years* and *Ten*,] ver. 10. that is, as if he had ſaid, Tho' the Fathers lived much longer, yet as wickedneſs *increaſed* in the World, ſo Mens Days *decreaſed*; and now their Lives are daily ſhortned, and one Generation ſoon diſpatched away after another: All Men have a quick dimiſſion from their appearance upon the Stage of the World, and all this is done, that the World it ſelf may come the ſooner to its perpetual period. And tho' ſome [by reaſon of a more robuſt Conſtitution than others have, and therefore may attain to *fourſcore Years*,] yet few exceed *ſeventy*, and fewer attain to it; and ſuch as live longer, do pay *intereſt* of Pains, Sorrow and Miſery for their inlargement beyond the generality of Mankind, becauſe the Body is then much decayed, and filled with Diſeaſes, &c. And thus *Barzillai* accounted himſelf a very Aged Man, when he had attained to the age of *fourſcore Years* old,

2 *Sam.* 19. 32. saying of himself [How long have I to live, can I taſt what I eat or drink, *&c?* and [*how long have I to live*] ver. 34. that is, *my Breath is corrupt*, or my *Spirits* are *Spent*, my *Days are extinct*, and *the Grave is ready for me*, as *Job* ſpeaks of himſelf, *Job* 17. 1. *He* was *Senex* quaſi *Seminex*, *half dead*, and felt himſelf *pedetentim mori*, to die by peace-meal, even *ſenſim ſine ſenſu*, inſenſibly yielding every day ſomewhat to Death, and therefore he tells *David* with a moſt thankful Heart, that it was not adviſeable for him to embrace his Royal Offer of a Courtly Life to him, who was now ſuperannuated, and was already (as it were) dead both to Meat and Muſick, all *ſuch delights of the Sons of Men*, Eccleſ. 2. 8. Thoſe days (ſaith he) are come upon me wherein *I can have no pleaſure*, Eccleſ. 12. 2, 3, 4. Therefore 'tis high time now for me, and for all ſuch Aged Ones as I am, to make and pack up our Fardles, and prepare to paſs hence into that *better Country*, which is *Heaven*, (as the Holy *Patriarchs* did, *Heb.* 11. 13, 14, 15, 16.) My continuance can be but ſhort here in this World, (ſaith old *Barzillai* to *David*) and therefore I would *not now leave my Habitation*, (where I may retire and reſt me from the Noiſe of the

the World) but now my whole work is, a firm resolve to make *ready* for *Death*, and to *lay hold on Eternal Life*, 2 *Sam.* 19. 35, 36, 37. 1 *Tim.* 6. 19. And indeed this is the indispensable Duty, not only of such as are Old, but 'tis necessary for all that are Young to do so likewise, because this Quantity, and the length of the Lives of all Persons, in all Ages, is very uncertain; the Proverb saith, as soon goes the Lambs Skin to the Market, as that of the Old Sheep; the *Young may die*, as well as the *Old must die*: And 'tis an old observation, yea and a true one, that there be more of Mankind, which die under Ten Years old, than they which live above Sixty Years. We all *live in Houses of Clay*, and our Foundation is in the Dust, easily crushed as the Moth, with the least touch of Man's Finger; and much sooner are we crushed with the Finger of God,) *Job.* 4. 19. If our Cottages of Clay had a Foundation of *Brass* or *Marble*, they might possibly stand some time in the World; but seeing our best Foundation is no better than Dust, call'd *Terra Fricabilis*, which is so easily crumbled asunder in the Hand of a Child: Oh 'tis no less than a Miracle of Mercy, that some of us do subsist so long alive upon the Earth, seeing the Walls of our *Earthly*

Tabernacles (as *Paul* calls the *Body*, 2 Cor 5. 2.) are weak, and the *Foundation* of our Clay-Houſe is far weaker, being but *Duſt*, light, flying and unſtable Duſt, which is ſoon wherried and whirled about with every puff of Wind: Hence *Man* is not only a Clod of Clay, neatly made up by a skilful Potter, as was the firſt Man *Adam*, [*of the Earth, Earthy,*] 1 Cor. 15. 47. and a Lump of Duſt. *Gen.* 3. 19. but alſo he is but an *heap of Vanity*, yea at *his beſt eſtate* [*Kol-Adam, Kol-Abel*] *omnis Adam eſt totus Abel*, every *Adam* or *Man*, is wholly *Abel* or *Vanity*, even when he ſeems to be well underlaid on all ſides, and moſt ſetled and likelieſt to live, *Pſal.* 39. 5, 11. And again *Adam Abel's compar eſt*, *Adam* is *Abel's Mate*: Man is like to Vanity, and as a Shadow that hath no ſubſtance in it, or ſubſiſtence at all, *Pſal.* 144. 4. and he not only *conſumes away* like a Moth, as *Pſal.* 39. 11. as before, with the leaſt touch the Moth is cruſhed; but 'tis ſaid further, [*that Man is cruſhed before the Moth*, Job 4. 19. It is not ſaid there, *before the Lion*, (that would be no wonder) but 'tis ſaid [*before the Moth,*] to ſhew what a poor thing *Man is*, when a *Moth can cruſh him*, that a Fly can choak him, as it did *Pope Alexander*; that

that an Hair in a Mess of Milk may stifle him, as it did great *Marius* the Roman General, and (as some say) *Pope Adrian* also. Thus *Drusius* (the Emperor, *Claudius*'s Son,) was suffocated with a Pear that was cast up and catched by his Mouth in sport only. Thus *Æmilius Lepidus* was destroyed by a light bruise upon his Toe. Many such Stories I might relate, of this Nature; but to be short, let me add only one more, which I can both affirm and confirm upon my own knowledge, that a great Lord of this Land, (who was my Patron, *&c.*) that was brought to his Death, only by paring a Corn upon his Toe, which did after Gangreen, and struck upwards, whereof at last he died. All these *Instances* (with many more which might be added) do demonstrate the *uncertainty* of our Lives, as there is nothing more *certain* than our Deaths, (for that is established by the great Statute of Heaven, that *all Men must once die*, Heb. 9. 27.) yet as to the time of it, there is nothing more *uncertain*, especially considering [how *Man is destroyed from Morning to Evening*,] Job 4. 20. the Hebrew reading is, he is *beaten to pieces as in a Mortar*, with one Misery upon another, until the very Breath be beaten out of his Body at

yea and all this *from Morning to Evening*, that is, not only all the day long, but even all the *life long*; which is here (for its brevity) compared to an Artificial Day, and such as no Man can be sure he *shall have twelve hours to his Day*: For how many are there, whose Sun hath set at High-noon, even in the prime and pride of their Days they have been snatcht away by the Hand of Death; yea, yet higher, how many do we see whose *Sun* doth set at its very rising; so that they are carried from the Grave of the Womb, to the Womb of the Grave, even from their *Birth* to their *Burial*: And assuredly we all every Hour, as well as every Day, do yield somewhat unto Death, and nearer and nearer do we approach to our latter end; yea and the longest liver of us hath but a short cut from the first Rising of our Sun, to its last Setting, from our Birth to our Burial: The *Psalmist* saith, that [the *Sun knoweth the time of its going down*,] Psal. 104. 19. But this cannot be said of any of the Sons of Men, that they know the time of their going down to the Grave; good *Isaac* knew it not, *Gen.* 27. 1, 2. (except only *Hezekiah*, who by a special dispensation from God, knew it;) much less can we, that are old, know the time of

our

our going down, or the Quantity of our Old Age. The Jewiſh Rabbins do mention three Steps or Degrees in the meaſure of Old Age; the firſt they call [*Senes*,] the ſecond they name [*Annoſi*] and the third they ſtile [*Decrepidi*;] and thus they reckon, when a Man comes to be Sixty Years old, ſuch an one they reckon'd to be reached only to the Borders of Old Age, paſſing along until he ſtepped on unto Seventy Years of Age, at which Age *David* died, ſee after: Then *Secondly*, They accounted him among the *Annoſos*, an Old Man indeed, who lived up from Seventy to Eighty Years of Age; ſuch a Man was got a great way into that far Country of Old Age, even into that Hyperborean cold and frozen Climate, where the Snow of Hoary Hairs lay continually upon his Head undiſſolved. But *Thirdly*, The higheſt Step and Degree, is ſuch an one as liveth above Eighty Years old; thoſe they number among *Decrepid* Ones, that then are Superannuated, declining to a Doteage, in whom all the Senſes of the Body, yea, and all the Faculties of the Soul begin daily to decay, (as in Old *Barzillai* before-named, according to his own confeſſion unto *David*;) ſuch very Aged Perſons are accounted *wondrous Old*, as is the Ex-

preſſion in the Old Singing Pſalms, *Pſal.* 90. 10. for it falls out moſt commonly, that in this wondrous Old Age, we pay the deep intereſt of Pains in dolorous Diſtempers, being the time wherein, (as *Solomon* ſaith) we *can have no Pleaſure*, Eccleſ. 12. 1, 2, &c. and according to the Old *Adage*, [*bis Pueri Senes*] Old Perſons are twice Children; as after their Birth, ſo before their Death they become meerly *Childiſh*, which once did occaſion my ſelf to ſay, when I ſaw a very Old Woman, (one paſt all other Work) rocking the Cradle, that had a very Young Babe in it, behold, *there is one Child rocking another*; and thereupon I gave her the beſt advice I could, how it was high time for her to make ſure work for a better World. Moreover, beſide this Rabinical Animadverſion thus Spiritually Improved, we have another more Critical and Chriſtian Calculation of Man's Life, made by one of our Engliſh *Martyrs*, who left behind this curious Criticiſm, ſaying, [becauſe the common term of Humane Life, in the ordinary courſe of Nature, is but *Threeſcore Years and Ten*, according to *Moſes* (that Man of God's) computation, *Pſal.* 90. 10. Now if we divide thoſe Seventy Years into four Equal Parts, then muſt it neceſſarily fol-

follow, that every Man is three parts Dead, when he doth but arrive at the Age of Fifty Years. This ſolid Obſervation doth much ſooner mind us of our Mortality, than that before of the Jewiſh *Rabbins*; and to the ſame purpoſe I my ſelf have (both publickly and privately) taught the like Leſſon upon the end of my four Fingers and the Thumb, ſhewing to the Eyes of thoſe I ſpake to, how the top of the little Finger repreſents our Childhood, the top of the next Finger ſhews our Youth, the top of the longeſt Finger demonſtrates our Middle Age, when we come to our Ακμὴ, or fulneſs of Height and Health; then the top of the fore Finger, (which is a little lower than the middle Finger) declares our beginning to decline by little and little; but laſtly from the top of the fore Finger to the top of the Thumb there is a great fall, and hence is it that we uſually ſay, ſuch an Aged Perſon breaks faſt in a little time; the Lord help us to learn this Leſſon upon our Fingers ends. *NB. Note well*, The God of Nature hath ordained, that Nature in all his created Beings muſt decay; yet this is the Sovereign Power of the Creator over all his Creatures to determine the Time, meaſure and Quantity, when the period of Nature ſhall come to decay,

and

and be diſſolved. Thus *Job* acknowledges this Divine Rule and Dominion of God over all Mankind, ſaying, [*his Days are determined, the number of his Months are with God*; thou haſt appointed his Bounds that he cannot paſs, *&c.*] *Job* 14. 5, 6. that is, God hath ſet every Man the Bounds of *his Time*, (whether *ſhorter*) called here [his Days] or longer, [*the number of his Months*;] and whether ſhorter or longer, they have both their Bounds which they cannot paſs, no more than the unruly *Ocean* can *paſs the Bounds* that its *Maker hath ſet it*, Job 38. 8, 9, 10, 11. We ſhould think the ſame of the Waters of Afflictions that the Lord doth limit them, ſaying, [*thus far ſhalt thou go, and no farther*, and here *ſhall thy proud Waves be ſtaid.*] This Sovereign Rule and Dominion of God over Man, in determining his Time upon Earth, is made manifeſt, in ordering ſuch long Leaſes of Life to the *Patriarchs*, and ſuch a ſhort Term to the Lives of the following Ages: This is elegantly expreſſed thus by *Tertullian*, [*Vitæ fugere illis, ſed nobis tantum Spithamas Deus dedit illi Gigantes fuere, nos vero Pygmæi, &c.*] God gave to the *Patriarchs* whole and *long Acres* of Life, but to us only a Span-breadth thereof; they were lofty

lofty Gyants, but we are puny Dwarfs; yea, and this Divine Dominion is daily apparent, as the only over-ruling Reaſon why ſome, *likely to live long*, do die ſoon; while others that are more weak with daily Diſtempers, do live longer than they; as well as it is the Will and Wiſdom of God, that we ſee the Sons and Daughters of Men do die daily in all Ages, in Childhood, Youth, Middle Age, as well as Old Age: And as God hath ſet Bounds to *Man's Time*, ſo hath he determined *Man's Task* likewiſe; thus *John Baptiſt* had his *Courſe to fulfil*, Acts 13. 25. the word for *Courſe* in Greek is [Δρόμος,] from whence the *Dromedary* hath his Name, which is a ſwift Creature, and will run an hundred miles in a day: Thus the *Baptiſt*, tho' he lived not long, but was cut off by *Herod*, yet he lived much in a little ſpace; he wrought hard, and made haſte in his Work, as not willing to be taken with his Task undone. Thus 'tis ſaid of *David* alſo in *Acts* 13. 36. that he *ſerved out his Generation*, and then he *fell aſleep* after he had done his *Generation-work* according to the *will of God*. There is an *appointed time to Man upon the Earth*, Job 7. 1. both for his *Time*, and for his *Task*; and he who bears up the Heavens, preſcribes ſuch a *Pillar* before

fore Man, (with this Inſcription writ upon it, [*ne plus ultra*] thou ſhalt *paſs no farther:* [*ſtat ſua cuique dies*] ſaid *Virgil* of old, every Man hath his Day ſet him wherein he muſt die, his laſt Day ſtands, but all the reſt of his days to that Day are in a running poſture. Some *Lutherans* indeed do teach, that God hath not *determined the period of Men's Days*, but that it is in *Man's power* either to *lengthen* or to *ſhorten* them: But many *Scriptures* teach the contrary, that God hath ſet the Bounds of every Man's Life to a very Day (as well as his *Place of Dwelling*, Gen. 49. 13. *Acts* 17. 26.) and tho' thoſe Bounds may be paſſed, which our Natural Conſtitution in the ordinary courſe of Nature *ſetteth*, yet thoſe Bounds which the Almighty Power and Providence of God *ſetteth* us, we can never paſs: For *Job* uſeth two *Metaphors*.

(1*ſt*) That of an *Hireling*, Job 7. 1. and 14. 6. Now we agree with Hirelings to work with us *for a day*, and therefore are they called *Day-labourers*.

The 2*d Metaphor* is, *Tſaba*,, warfare, στρατεία, Sept. *Job* 4. 1. becauſe man's life is expoſed to *Pirates*, as before: Now if our life be a *warfare*, 'tis well known how *Soldiers* have their time of *fighting*, and their time of *reſting* according to the Com-

Commands of their *Captain General.* They muſt obey his Order for both falling on, and for falling back as he pleaſeth, *ſtat pro Ratione Voluntas*, his Will is a Law to them. And thus every *good Soldier of Jeſus Chriſt*, (as *Timothy* is called, 2 *Tim.* 2. 3.) muſt be willing either to *Act* or to *Reſt* according to the Commands of the *Captain of our Salvation*, (as *Chriſt* is called *Heb.* 2. 10.) whether private *Chriſtian* or publick *Miniſter*, we muſt all reſign up our Wills into his Will, as we read in *Eccleſiaſtick Hiſtory* of a famous *Miniſter*, (called *Martinus*) who being by the Lord ſeized upon with Sickneſs, 'tis recorded how he prayed, [*Decumbens dico, Domine, ſi adhuc populo tuo ſim neceſſarius, laborem tuum non recuſo, &c.*] that is, Lord, ſerve thy ſelf of me, for thy Service is ſweet to me; if thou haſt no more Service to command me, then, *O Father, into thy Hands I commend my Spirit*, &c. This was piouſly ſpoken, yet *Old Simeon*, (as we read *Luke* 2. 29, 30.) ſpake better, ſaying, [*Lord, now let thou thy Servant depart in peace.*] Now this good Old Man, having laid in his Heart, what he lapt in his Arms, (the moſt bleſſed Armful that he ever met with, even the Beautiful *Babe of Bethlehem*) he then ſung the [*nunc Dimittas*] ſo called, even his

his Soul out of his Body, ſaying, I fear no Sin, I dread no Death, I have lived enough, I have my Life, I have ſlong'd enough, I have my Love, I have ſeen enough, I have my Light, I have ſerved enough, I have my ſatisfaction, I have ſorrowed enough, I have my conſolation, (even the *conſolation of Iſrael*,) whom I and other Believers have long *waited for*, ver. 25. even the *Meſſiah*, that *Menachem* or *Comforter*, mentioned, *Lam.* 1 16. and yet ſinging farther, Oh, ſweet Babe, let this *Pſalm* ſerve for a *Lullaby* to thee, and for a *Funeral* for me; Oh ſleep in my Arms, and let me ſleep in thy Peace. All this ſweet Song *Simeon* concludes, with the procuring cauſe of his Sacred Muſick, ſaying, [*for mine Eyes have ſeen thy Salvation.*] This was his great ſatisfaction, that he had accompliſhed his Service to his Moſt Honourable Lord and Maſter, who had employ'd him all his Life in moſt *Honourable Work*, and who (he was aſſured) was going to pay him moſt *Honourable Wages*; ſeeing he had got his Saviour, ἐν κύτει in his Heart, as well as ἐν χειρὶ in his Hand, as 'tis ſaid of the *Bleſſed Virgin*, who therefore is ſaid to rejoice, Greek ἠγαλλίασε, danced a *Gallyard*, and to *magnifie* the *Lord her Saviour*, as well as ours, *Luke* 1. 47.

But

But far above thoſe two Inſtances aforeſaid, to wit, (*Ancient Martinus*, and the *good Old Man Simeon*) our *ſinleſs Saviour* ſaith beſt of all concerning himſelf, in his laſt Prayer before his Death, ſaying, [*Mine Hour is now come, O Father, Glorifie thy Son*, &c. *I have Glorified thee on Earth, I have finiſhed the Work thou gaveſt me to do*, and now, *O Father, Glorifie me with thy Self*, that is, *my Manhood*, with the ſame Glory which my *Godhead had before the World was made*, John 17. 1, 4, 5, *&c.* Our Lord did not did not ask his *Wages* before his *Work* was done; his Time was now come, and he was now Ripe and Ready to be gone into his Fathers Kingdom. This holy practice of our precious *Redeemer* is left upon Record, on purpoſe, for our inſtruction and comfort, *Rom.* 15. 4. that it may be a Pattern to avoid that precipitancy, which prevailed over thoſe two famous *Prophets* (*men of God*) *Elijah* and *Jonah*, who both of them in a ſtrong Pang of Paſſion, deſired to Die before their Hour of Dying was come; and therefore are we told, that theſe great Servants of God were *ſubject* to the *like Paſſions as we are*, Acts 14. 15. Jam. 5. 17. It is a ſinful deſire for any who would be gone to *Heaven*, before their Work

be

be done *on Earth*; we must rather say, [*O Father*, if thou hast any further Service for me to do, I am willing to live longer, *&c. the Will of the Lord be done*, Acts 21. 14.

Having thus far discoursed upon the first *Accident* of *Old Age*, (after its *Nature*) namely, the *Quantity* or Measure of it, which we have observed to be *Uncertain* and *Various*, either *long* or *short*, according to the *Statute-law* of the great *Law-giver*, the *Lord of Lords*, &c. [who hath *appointed all men once to die*, &c.] Heb. 9. 27. even *Methuselem*, (who was the longest liver, upon Scripture-record, and who came the neareſt to be a *Thousand* Years Old, which is reckoned a number of perfection, never attained to by any mere man.) Tho' he lived many Hundred Years, even near to a *Thousand*, and *begat Sons and Daughters*, yet he died at the last; see my first *Volume* of the *History* and *Mystery* of the *Holy Scriptures* of *Him* at large.

Now I come to the *Second Accident* of *Old Age*, to wit, the *Quality* or Manner of it, which is either *Good* or *Evil*. Concerning the *first*, How it is a *good Old Age* in its own Nature, and by God's blessing upon it, I have already demonstrated in the foregoing Discourse; and I do design

sign to enlarge much more upon that Point, when I arrive at the Third Part, (after its *Nature* and *Accidents*) to declare the *Dues* to, and the *Duties* of *Aged Ones*, whereby *Old Age* may become *good* indeed.

Now as touching the latter of these two, That *Old Age* is an *Evil Age*, that *Senium & Malum convertuntur*: These two are convertible Terms; *Solomon* the Wise doth sufficiently evince and evidence, in *his* saying, [*Oh, Young Ones, remember your Creator, before Evil Days come, and the Years draw nigh, wherein you shall say, I have no pleasure in them,*] Eccles. 12. 1. Wherein he begins to describe,

First, The wearisom *evils of Old Age*, from the latter end of *ver.* 1. to the last end of *ver.* 6. Then,

Secondly, Of the evils of Death, *ver.* 7. both which he brings in as *two strong motives*, to urge Young ones to be mindful of their *Duty*.

For, *First* in the *General*, All *Authors*, both those that be *Civil*, as well as those that be *Sacred*, do unanimously concur in this point, That *Old Age* and *Misery* are very seldom found separated. As,

(1.) *Plutarch* saith, *Senectus ut Africa semper aliquid Novi adportat*, as *Affrica* is never without some Monster, so *Old*

Age is never without ſome *Ailment.*

(2). *Cato* ſaith, [*Solet Senectus eſſe, Deformis, Infirma, Oblivioſa, Edulenta, Lucroſa, Indocilis & Moleſta,*] that is, Old Age uſeth to be Deformed, Feeble, Forgetful, Toothleſs, Covetous, Unteachable and Unquiet.

(3.) *Horace* ſaith, [*Multa Senem circumveniunt Incommoda,*] Many are the Inconveniencies that do encompaſs Old Perſons, *&c.*

(4.) *Seneca* ſaith in his Epiſtle 58. and that out of his own Experience, [*How are our laſt Days the very Dregs and Lees of our Lives,*] when the clearer part is drawn out and ſpent, then the worſt part does ſink down to the bottom.

To add no more of *Pagan Authors*, ſave only *Epictetus*, (5.) calls *Old Age*, [*Vita Mors, Cadaver Spirans, & Mobile Cadaver,*] that is, Old Age is a Living Death, 'tis a Breathing Corps, yea a moving Carcaſe.

Now hear what *Sacred Authors* ſay better than thoſe aforeſaid, is too long to quote together in this place, ſeeing ſo much hath been ſhewed hereof already. The *Book* of our own ſmarting *Experiences* ſpeak loud enough to convince us of the *Evil of Old Age.* How many Bodily Infirmities doth daily attend us that are

Aged,

Aged, what *Aches* of the Bones, what *Pains* in the Joints, what *Convulsions* of the Sinews, what *Torments* of the Bowels; how dolorous are those Diseases of *Collick*, *Stone* and *Strangury* in Old Persons; what *Hollow Coughs*, *Distillations* of *Rhume*, what *Debility* of *Nature* incroaches daily upon all our Senses of Body, and upon all the Faculties of the Mind, our Appetites to Food, our Digestions of Food both feeble; so that in a word, *Old Age* is like the *Common-Sewer*, into which all Diseases do empty themselves; and therefore *Old Age* may well be called an *Evil Age*.

Secondly, After this General, more particularly the, The *Evils* of *Old Age* may be reduced to *Three Heads*, to wit, *Natural*, *Moral* and *Spiritual*.

(*1st*) The *Evils* that are *Natural* to it: And (1.) As to the *Body*, Many Distempers do attend it, as those even now named, and many more beside, whereof *Barzillai* complained, as before, 2 *Sam.* 19. 34, 35. All Aged Persons do smartly feel the Burden of it, as that ancient Woman in *Plautus*, who being wished by her Friends (that were walking along with her) to hasten and amend her pace, smartly answered, that she could not do so, for she carried a great Burden upon her Back;

and when no Burden did (as they ſaid) appear to their Eyes, ſhe replied again, that *Threeſcore Years* were paſſed over her Head, and that was her *Burden*. And the ſame may be ſaid by thoſe, whoſe Spirits are much ſpent, and whoſe Strength is much waſted even at that Age; for then *Age* it ſelf alone is a *Burden*, much more in thoſe that live up even to a *Doteage* and *Uſeleſneſs*. This is made more manifeſt by *Solomon*, Eccleſ. 12. where he declares the Decays accompanying Old Age; he ſaith according to our *Engliſh Tranſlation*, [then the *Graſhopper ſhall be a Burden*,] ver. 5. but the original word, Hebrew, ſignifies [the *curvature* or *crookedneſs* of the *Back*, which in Old Perſons ſtands bent like a *Graſhopper*; and this makes the motions of ſuch as are crooked with Age to be the more burdenſome, or the *Phraſe* there is *Hyperbolical*, intimating, that every light matter will oppreſs thoſe with their Burden, who are already become a Burden to themſelves: And beſide this *Natural Evil* of Old Age, as to the *Body*, there is a *ſecond* as to the *Eſtate*, many *Loſſes* and *Croſſes* do come upon them; as the loſs of ſome of their neareſt and deareſt Relations, and ſuch like, complaining as Old *Jacob* did, [who mourned for his *loſt Son many days*, and *refuſed*

refuſed to be Comforted,] Gen. 37. 34, 35. and again, [*Joſeph is not*, and *Simeon is not*, and muſt I loſe my dear *Benjamin* too, as he had loſt *Rachel*, &c? Gen. 42. 36. Tho' *Jacob*'s mourning was only for *ſuppoſed loſſes*, yet he had *real ones* alſo, as of his beloved *Rachel*, &c. Many more inſtances may be mentioned, as of *David* mourning for the *real loſs* of his Son *Abſolom*, for whom he made ſo deep a lamentation, *&c.* This loſs of Relations is the greater *Natural Evil*, becauſe it is againſt the courſe of Nature for Parents to bury Children, whereas Children uſe to bury Parents, for one Generation paſſeth away, when another cometh; ſo that a Generation of Children doth (as it were) thruſt out of the World a Generation of Parents by Natures Law. To all this let me add my own exerciſe with this Evil, who have lived to bury *eight Children* out of *nine*, &c. And yet there is a *third Natural Evil* attending *Old Age*, as to their reſpect and reverence from the Younger Sort; alas, how are they as *Lamps deſpiſed*, as *Old Job* complains, *Job* 12. 4, 5. and more fully *Job* 19. 15, 16, 17, 18. and 30. 1, to 11, 12, 13. where he ſighs out theſe ſad words, ſaying, [*Upon my Right Hand riſe the Young, they puſh away my Feet*, &c.] which explaineth what he had ſaid, *ver.* 1.

that *Younger* than he was, did not only *deride him*, and *laughed him to ſcorn*, (tho' they were no better than *Shagrag Dog-keepers*, as he calls them, and moſt miſerably poor, *ver.* 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10.) Yet theſe *Young Scoundrils* dared to *kick him with their Feet*, or trip up his Heels to lay him along. *Job* was wont to have the chiefeſt Seats in the *Temple*, and lowly Salutations in the *Market-place*: He was now *Ancient*, and had been *Honourable*, as he had ſet forth at large in *Chap.* 29. but here he bewails his Miſery, that he cannot have a Room in any Place to ſtand in, but every *paltry Boy is ready to puſh him down*, &c. Thus likewiſe thoſe Ill-bred and Miſtaught Children did petulantly deride that Old Prophet *Eliſha*, yelling out thoſe impudent words, [*go up thou Bald-pate*, &c.] 2 Kings 2. 23. Having nothing worſe to upbraid him with, they taunt that Head with their Scorns, which God had crowned with Honour, *Prov.* 16. 31. And the ſame God who had thus honoured his Servant *Eliſha*, doth likewiſe vindicate this diſhonour caſt upon him, ordering *two She Bears* (poſſibly robb'd of their Whelps) to worry *forty and two* of thoſe Ill-natur'd Children: As their Childhood did not excuſe them, ſo their Idolatrous Parents

rents were punished in being writ Childless, for giving them no better Education; see more of this in my *Third Volume* on this same *History*. NB. *Note well*, Suppose any of us *Aged* Ones be at any time derided by Younger ones, this may allay our Grief, that God doth not lead us into any untrodden Path, for our *Betters* have gone before us therein, *&c.*

The *Second* and *Third Evils*, to wit, *Moral* and *Spiritual*, which do attend *Old Age*, may be put together, and briefly improved. As,

(*1st*) The *Moral Evils* are, (1.) An *over-eagerness* in a greedy seeking of Wealth, and yet a niggardly unwillingness to spend what is gotten; no not sometimes to supply the Necessities of Nature, *&c.*

(2.) A *dull*, slow and cold pace in all proceedings of Business, yea with a timorous and fearful temper of Mind, and yet fretting and chafing at the same dulness and backwardness that he beholds in others under him.

(3.) The *Old Man* is of a *morose* Mind, hard to be pleased himself, and as hard to please others; a froward Spirit is easily displeased, (as we see in Babes at the Breast, *&c.*) yet are not so easily pleased again.

(4.) Another *Moral Evil* in the Aged is, to complain of *preſent Times*, but praiſing *former Days* of old, which the Old Men of thoſe Days did as much complain of, as *he* doth of *theſe*: Whereas indeed the fault *lieth* not in the *Times*, (either preſent, or former,) but in the *Perſons* that *liveth* in thoſe Times, for in every Age, better Hearts and Lives would make better Times.

Then *(2dly)* After theſe *Moral Vices* do follow *Spiritual Sins*, which are found in Old Age, ſuch as (1.) *Ignorance*, a meer Child for knowledge, no Fool like to an Old Fool; and therefore tho' this *ſilly Child* be an *hundred Years* old, he is denounced by a Divine Mouth to be *accurſed*, Iſai. 65. 20. Thus the Old Age of that ſilly Child *Shimei*, (who childiſhly plaid away his own Life) could not exempt him from Juſtice; for it was *David*'s charge to his Son *Solomon*, [*let not his Hoary Head go down to the Grave in peace*,] 1 Kings 2. 6.

(2.) An *indocible*, *untractable Frame* attends *Old Age* to learn the great Myſteries of Godlineſs, as appeared in *Old Nicodemus*, tho' a *Maſter in Iſrael*, and could not but have read of a *New Heart*, which God promiſed to give, *&c.* in the Prophet *Ezekiel*, and in other places of the *Old Teſtament*; yet how *aukward* was

he

he in entertaining the Doctrine of Regeneration, objecting againſt it; *Firſt*, [*How can a Man be born again?*] And after *Chriſt* had told him, that the way of the *Spirits working* this work, was *incomprehenſible*, &c. yet comes he off again with his (*How can theſe things be?*] John 3. 4, 10. This *Old Man*, (nay an Old *Maſter* in teaching work) underſtood no more of the Myſtery of the New Birth, than a *rude Ruſtick* can comprehend the profoundeſt Points of the *Mathematicks*, which be no better than *Gibberiſh* to him when he hears them: *NB.* However it is no matter how dull the Scholar is, when *Chriſt* himſelf will become the Teacher, as here; for this *Nicodemus*, who had long been a Night-bird, during the Life of *Chriſt*, did at the laſt break forth as the Sun from under a Cloud, to manifeſt his Love to his Lord after his Death, *John* 19. 39.

(3.) To illuſtrate this farther, *Old Age* is *Self-conceited*, and cannot eaſily be convinced, through Pride of Spirit rooted in it, he is too wiſe to learn, therefore was it that *Solomon* preferred [a *poor and wiſe Child*, before an *Old and Fooliſh King*, who abhors *to be admoniſhed*,] Eccleſ. 4. 13, 14. for the *Young Child* is apt to learn, and ready to receive Inſtruction, and will be as careful to follow it; and all this

is

is *true Wiſdom*: Whereas an *Old* and *Fooliſh King* is not only *weak*, but alſo *wilful*, and his Pride is the ground of his Wilfulneſs; as he is ſhort-ſighted in his Mind, ſo he is ſtubborn and unconvincible in his Will: There have been ſuch Kings in the World, who in their Old Age, have ſhewed themſelves ſo ſelf-willed, and ſo wedded to their own vain Opinions, that they never endured to ask Advice, and if any were given them, what they fancied not, they aſſuredly rejected it; though they ſometimes, yea very ſeldom ask Counſel, yet never follow any but their *own*, until they ruin themſelves and their People.

(4.) As the *Three* former brings Ruine, *&c.* to the *Bodies*, not only of *Old and Fooliſh Kings*, but alſo of *Old and Fooliſh Subjects*, who do harden their Hearts againſt all good Counſel; yea, and that which is worſt of all, theſe *Three* afore-named, bring deſtruction to their *Souls* likewiſe, by their living and dying in that great ſin of *Unbelief*, and *final Impenitency*, which their *cuſtom in ſin* (taking away all *conſcience of ſin*) doth at laſt ſeal them up in, where the ſuperabounding Grace of God doth not interpoſe to diſappoint it. This refractory and untoward, untractable Temper of ab-

abhorring to be taught, hath been a long time obſerved, univerſally to accompany *Old Age*; inſomuch that this was the firſt ground of that *Old* Greek *Adage*, [γεϱὸν διδάσκαλον,] *Senum Doctor*, a Teacher of Old Perſons; by which *Phraſe* the Wiſdom of the Ancients uſed to expreſs any *labour in vain*, like thoſe other Phraſes, [*Æthiopem lavare*] to *waſh a Blackmore white*, which Phraſe is uſed in Scripture, *Jer.* 13. 23. And to the ſame purpoſe is that *Adage* uſed by Pagan Authors, [*Syſiphi ſaxum voluere*,] a Poetical Fiction, that this *Syſiphus* was doomed unto as a puniſhment for his former Faults, that he was to roll an heavy Stone up the Hill, which then did run down again of it ſelf with its own weight; and when it came to the bottom, his work was to roll it up again; yea, and that which was the Miſchief and Miſery of this Man in this Work, it muſt be his only and continual Task for all his time, *&c.* All theſe *Adages* do demonſtrate the unteachableneſs of *Old Age*, and that if we do not (through the Grace of God) *remember our Creator in the days of our Youth*, while that tractable Temper continueth with us, but ſtill drive it off until Old, then become we ſo ſlow, ſo oblivious, and ſo ſetled upon the Lees, *&c.* inſomuch that the Mi-